

Ἀνεξιχνίαστοι πλοῦτοι τοῦ Χριστοῦ

THE
Unsearchable Riches
OF
CHRIST.

O R,

MEAT *for* STRONG MEN,
And
MILKE *for* BABES.

Held forth in Twenty-two

SERMONS

FROM

Ephesians III. VIII.

By THOMAS BROOKS, Preacher of the word
in *London.*

The Third Edition Corrected and Amended.

Ipse unus erit tibi omnia, quia in ipso uno bono, bona sunt omnia, Aug.

*It pleased the father, that in him should all fullness dwell. Col. 1. 19.
In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Chap. 2. 3.*

LONDON: Printed by M. S. for John Hancock at the first Shop in
Popes head-Alley, next to Cornhill.

1661.

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THE
Unsearchable Riches

70

CHRS

25

MEAT & STRONG MEN

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MILKE Co. BABES.

Every town in which we

SEYMOUR

100

3940471-1

1661

B873

A

The Third Edition of Correlation and Assessment

1870

in the case of the above mentioned persons, the following persons are named as witnesses: Col. J. H. ...

NOV 20 1967

1900



TO
All true ISRAELITES,
 In whom there is no guile.

Grace, Mercy, and Peace, from God the Father, through our
 Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied.

DEAR HEARERS



Y design (in appearing once
 more in Print) is not to please
 the captious Critick, or the
 fullen Cinnick, but to heighten
 your fellowship with the
 Father, and the Son, and to further you in a
 closer walking with God, and to ripen you
 more and more for Reigning with God,
 when you shall be here no more.

Beloved in our Lord, there are two sad and
 great evils (Oh that there were no more!)
 among the Saints this day: The strong are ve-

ry

1 John 1. 3.

B. D. Dickinson #1 # 229 (Oct. 1930) 7/6 (2000)

Rom. 14. 1. to
di.

*Invaliam om-
ne naturā que-
rulum. Sen.
Weak Spirits
are ever quar-
relling and
contending.*

yea, they make little of offending the weak; And the weak are as apt, and make as little of judging and condemning the strong. The serious and conscientious perusal of this Treatise, may (by the blessing of the Lord) contribute much to the preventing of those sad evils. You that are weak, may, in this Treatise, as in a Glasse, see your weaknessees, your mercies, your graces, your duties, your priviledges, and your comforts. You that are weak in grace, may here find many Questions answered, and doubts resolved, that tend to the satisfying, quieting, settling, and establishing of your precious souls in peace, joy, and Assurance. You that are weak in grace, may here find a staffe to support you, a light to direct you, a sword to defend you, and a Cordial to strengthen you, &c. And you that are strong in grace, may here see what is your way, what is your work, and what at last shall be your reward. Here you will find that which tends to the discovery of spirits, the sweetning of spirits, the uniting of spirits, the healing of spirits, and the making up of breaches, &c.

Here you will find *Meat for Strong men, and
Milk,*

DEDICATORY.

Milk for Babes. Here you will find who is more motion, then notion; more heart, then head; more spirit, then flesh; more inside, then outside, &c.

Here you will find *The Unsearchable Riches of Christ* (which of all boxes of precious Ointment, is the most precious) opened, and Oh how sweet must he be, that is the sweetest of sweets! In Christ are Riches of *Justification*, in Christ are riches of *Sanctification*, riches of *Consolation*, and riches of *Glorification*: And this following Trearise may serve as a key (I say not as a golden one) to open the door, that you may come where these Treasures lye. Christs Riches are like the eternal Springs of the earth, that cannot dry up, but are and shall be diffused by his Spirit and Gospel, untill his whole house be filled with them.

The excellency and usefulness of the *Riches of Christ*, and Answers to many weighty Queries about his *Unsearchable Riches*, is more then hinted at in this Tract. In this Tract much is spoken concerning the *Nature*, *Properties*, and *Excellencies of Humility*, which is both the beautifier and preserver of all other graces.

Here

THE EPISTLES

Humility is
*(Conseruatrice
 virtutum, faith
 Bernard) that
 which keeps
 all graces to-
 gether.
 Humilitas ani-
 mi, sublimitas
 Christiani.*

Here you may see that Those that are lowest in their own esteem, are highest in Gods esteem. Here you may see, that Humble souls are not so low and contemptible in the eyes of the world, as they are honourable in the eyes of God.

And if ever there were an age since Christ was on earth, wherein 'twas needful to Preach, presse, and Print this great Doctrine of Humility, of self, of soul-abasement, this is the Age wherein we live. Oh the pride, the stateliness, of the Professors of this Age! But because this point is largely spoken to in this Tract, I shall satisfie my selfe with this touch.

There are many other weighty things treated on, which for breuity sake I shall omit. Only give me leave to acquaint you with a few things about this ensuing Tract, and then I shall draw to a close.

First, That it is the substance of twenty-two Sermons Preached by me about three years agoe, on the Lecture nights at this place where now I Preach.

Secondly, That there are in it several other things of no small concernment to your souls; that

DEDICATORY.

that I did not then deliver, but have been given in since from that Fountain that fills all in all.

Thirdly, That though I have been much pressed to Print these Sermons, yet I should never have yeilded, had I not been thoroughly convinced and perswaded in my judgement and conscience, that they may (by the blessing of the Lord upon them) prove many wayes usefull and serviceable to all those honest Nathanaels, into whose hands they may fall; else they had been buried in the dark, and never come to publick light.

I have only a few Requests to make to you, and then I shall take my leave of you.

And my first Request is this, That you would meditate and dwell upon what you read, otherwise your pains (I say not your souls) and mine will be lost.

'Tis a Law among the Persees in India, To use premeditation in what they are to do, that if it be bad, to reject it, if good to act it. The Application is easie. The more any man is in the contemplation of truth, the more safer and firmer Impression is made upon his heart by truth. Christians must be like the clean

A Sermon
Preached ser-
veth but an
Auditory, a
Sermon Prin-
ted may serve
many Audi-
tories.

*Let il sine me-
ditatione arida
est, meditatio
sine lectione er-
rona est, oratio
sine meditatione
tepida est.
Aug. serm.*

THE EPISTLE.

Beasts, that parted the hoof and chewed the cud; they must by heavenly meditation chew truths, and concockt truths, or else they will never tast the sweetnesse that is in *Divine truths*.

The Angels
are much in
meditation.

Mary pondered the sayings of the Shepherds in her heart, Luke 2. 19. Not they that eat most, but they that digest most, are the most healthfull. Not they that get most, but they that keep most, are richest: So not they that hear most, or read most, but they that meditate most, are most edified and enriched.

Your actions
in passing
passe not a-
way, for eve-
ry good work
is a grain of
seed for eter-
nall life.

My second Request to you, is this, *That you will make conscience of living out those truths you read.*

To read much, and practice nothing, is to hunt much, and catch nothing.

Suetonius reports of Julius Caesar, That seeing Alexanders statue, he fetched a deep sigh, because he at that Age had done so little.

Ah! what cause have most to sigh; that they have heard so much, and read so much, and yet done so little? Surely 'tis more honourable to doe great things, then to speak or read great things. 'Tis the doer that will be most

THE EPISTLE

most happy at last, *Iohn. 13. 17. In vite libro Scribuntur qui quod possunt faciunt, & si quod debent, non possunt. Bern.* They are written in the Book of Life, that do what good they can, though they cannot do as they would.

I have read of a good man, coming from a publick Lecture, and being askt by one, whether the Sermon was done, answer'd with a sad sigh, Ah ! It is said, but not done.

My third Request is this, That you will pray over what you read.

Many read much, and pray little, and therefore get little by all they read.

Galen writes of a Fish called Urana Scopos, that hath but one eye, and yet looks continually up to Heaven. When a Christian has one eye upon his Book, the other should be looking up to Heaven for a blessing upon what he reads.

When one heard what admirable Victories Scanderbegs Sword had wrought, he would needs see it, and when he saw it, sayes he, This is but an ordinary Sword, alas! what can this do? Scanderbeg sent him word, I have sent thee my Sword, but I have the arm that did all by it.

Alas! what can Christs Sword, Christ

I was a saying of Augustine, one thousand two hundred years agoe, That we must take heed (least whilst we fear our exhortation being cool'd) prayer be not damped, and pride inflamed.

THE EPISTLE

word do without his arm? Therefore look up to Christs arm in prayer, that so his Sword, his word, may do great things in your souls.

Luther professeth, That he profited more by prayer in a short space, then by study in a longer; as John by weeping got the sealed Book open.

My fourth Request to you, is this, That if by the blessing of the Lord upon my weak endeavours, any leaf or line should drop myrrh, or mercy, marrow or fatnesse upon your spirits, that you will give all the glory to the God of Heaven; for to him alone it does belong.

Through grace I know I am a poor worm, I am nothing, I have nothing, but what I have received. The Crown becomes no head but Christs. Let him who is our all in all, have the honour and the glory of all, and I have my end.

Pliny tells of some in the remote parts of India, that have no mouths, and yet live on the smell of Herbs and sweet Flowers: But I hope better things of you, even such as accompany salvation.

My fifth Request to you, is this, That you would let me ye neer your hearts; when you are in the Mount (especially.)

Ingratitude
(say some)
is a Monster
in nature, a
solicium in
manners, and
a Paradox in
grace. dam-
ming up the
course of Do-
nations, Di-
vine and hu-
mane.

DEDICATORY.

O pray pray hard for me, that the spirit of the Lord may be redoubled upon me; that his word may prosper in my mouth, that it may run, and be glorified, and that I may be high in my communion with God, and holy and unblameable in my walkings with God; and that it may be still day with my soul; that I may live and dye in the joyes and comforts of the Holy Ghost; and that when my Sun is set, my Glasse out, my work done, my race run, I may rest in the everlasting arms of Divine love, &c.

My last and least Request to you, is this, That you will please to cast a Mantle of love over the Mistakes of the Presse, and do me that right, and your selves the courtesie, as before you read, to correct any material faults that you shall find pointed at in the Errata.

Gods easie passing over the many and daily Errata's of your lives, cannot but make you so ingenious as readily to passe over the Errata's in this Book.

You are choice Jewels in my eye, you lye near unto my heart, I am willing to spend & be spent for your sakes. My earnest and humble desire is, That my service and labour of love may be accepted by you; and that it may work much for your

1 Theſſ. 5. 25.
2 Theſſ. 3. 11.
Heb. 13. 18.
Col. 4. 3.
Phil. 1. 19.
2 Cor. 1. 11.
Acts 12. 5.

Rev. 14. 13.

In every Purgate there is at least one rotten kernel to be found, said Crates the Philosopher.

Rom. 15. 31.

THE EPISTLE, &c.

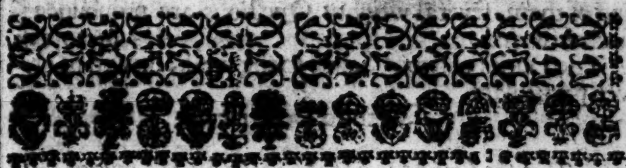
2 Pet. 1. 11.
Chap. 1. 8.

your internal and eternal welfare. And that an abundant entrance may be administred to you, into the everlasting Kingdome of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And that you may be filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and with that peace that passes understanding. This is, and by grace shall be the Prayer of him who desires to approve himself faithfull to Christ, his Truths, his Interests, and his People, and who is

Your soules Servant in
all Gospel Engagements.

THOMAS BROOKS.

THE



THE CONTENTS.

THe words opened.

Page, 1, 2.

The first Doctrine.

Those that are lowest in their own esteem, are highest in Gods esteem. Proved. 3, &c.

Eighteen Properties of an humble soul. 6 to 37

Five Reasons of the Point. 27 to 39

Eight Motives to provoke persons to be humble. 39 to 41

Nine Directions and Helps to keep us humble and low in our own eyes. 41 to 49

The dangerous nature of Pride, held forth in Nine Propositions. Also six wayes wherein Pride shews it self. 49 to 58

The second Doctrine.

All Saints are not of an equall size and growth in grace and businesse. 58, 59

Twelve things by which souls weak in grace are discovered and deciphered. 59 to 75

Twelve Supports and Comforts to uphold weak Christians, Wherein also you may see how Christ and they are sharers. 75 to 96

Six

The Contents.

Six Duties that lye upon weak Saints. And in the opening of them, severall weighty Questions are propounded, and answered. 96 to 124

The Duties of strong Saints to the weak, shewed in eleven particulars.

The third Doctrine.

That the Lord gives the best Gifts to his best beloved ones.

136, 137

What those best Gifts are, that Christ bestowes upon his dearest ones, shewed in ten particulars. 137 to 147

The difference between Christs giving, and the worlds giving, shewed in six things. 147 to 149

The Excellency of those Gifts that Christ gives, above all other Gifts that the world gives, shewed in five things. 149 to 151

Six Reasons why God gives the best Gifts to his dearest ones. 151 to 157

Eight Inferences or Uses made of this Point. 157 to 165

A Word to Sinners. 165 to 168

The fourth Doctrine.

That the Gifts and Graces that God bestows upon his people, should be improved, imployed, and exercised by his people.

This Point proved and opened. 168 to 170

Twelve Reasons why gracious souls should exercise and improve their Gifts and Graces. In the handling and opening of which Reasons, severall other considerable things fall in. 170 to 186

Three special ends, that the Gifts and Graces that God has bestowed upon Believers, should be exercised and improved to. 186 to 192

The main use is, To stir up all Christians to make a blessed improvement of their Gifts and Graces. 192

Seven

The Contents.

Seven Considerations, or Motives to stir Saints up to improve their Talents. 192 to 201

Quest. *When may a soul be said to be excellent in grace, or to have highly improved grace?*

This Questions receives ten Answers. 201 to 206

The fifth Doctrine.

That the Lord Jesus Christ is very rich.

This Point is opened and proved by eight Arguments.

Four Grounds and Reasons why the Lord Jesus Christ is held forth in the Word to be so very rich. 206 to 213

The Excellency of the riches of Christ, above all other riches in the world, held forth in seven particulars. 213 to 215

1 Use is *To exhort Christians to labour to be spiritually rich.* 216 to 221

Six Considerations or Motives to work Christians to this. In the handling of which, several weighty Questions are answered. 221 to 239

Quest. *What means must Christians use, that they may grow rich in grace?*

Answered in eight things. 239 to 249

Seven Propositions concerning spiritual riches. The serious minding of them may give to many much satisfaction, and prevent many Objections. 249 to 263

Five Notes, or Signs of a person that is spiritually rich. 263 to 268

1 Use. Don't joyn any thing with Christ, in the great work of your redemption and salvation. 268, 269

3 Use. If Christ be so rich, then take heed of 3 things. 269, 270, 271

4 Use. If Christ be so rich, O then open to Christ when he knocks. 271, 272

5 Use. If Christ be so rich, then sit down and wonder at his condescending love. 272, 273

6 Use. If Christ be so rich then prize Christ above all.

The Contents.

Five Considerations to work Christians to a high prize of Christ. 273 to 277

7 Use. Then trust to Christ, if he be so rich. Trust him with your best treasure. Trust him for power against the remainers of corruption. Trust him to bring you into the Land of rest. 277, 278

8 Use. If Christ be so rich, then don't leave him, don't forsake him, don't turn your backs upon him. 278, 279

9 Use. If Christ be so rich, O then let Christians strive more and more to clear up their interest in Christ.

Six Directions herein. 279 to 283

A word to Sinners. 283, 284

Nine Directions to poor souls that would gain an interest in Christ. 285 to 291

The sixth Doctrine.

That 'tis the great duty of Preachers or Ministers, to preach Jesus Christ to the people.

Proved. 291, 292

Five Reasons why Ministers must Preach Christ to the people. 292 to 296

How Christ is to be preached, shewed in eleven things.

1 He must be preached plainly, perspicuously. 297, 298

2 He must be preached faithfully. 298, 299

3 He must be preached humbly. 299, 300

4 He must be preached wisely. 300, 301

5 He must be preached zealously. 301, 302

6 He must be preached laboriously. 302, 303

7 He must be preached exemplarily. 303, 304, 305

8 He must be preached feelingly, experimentally. 305, 306

9 He must be preached rightly. 306, 307

10 He must be preached acceptably. 307, 308

11 He must be preached constantly. They must not lay

down the Bible, to take up the sword, &c. 308, 309

Three Rules or Directions, that such are to observe, as would preach Christ aright to the people.

1. They must get a Christ within. 310, 311

2. They

The Contents.

1 They must mind more, and study more Scripture-truths, Scripture mysteries, then humane Histories. No Histories comparable to the Histories of the Scriptures, hinted in seven things. 311, 312

3 They should dwell much upon the vanity of humane doctrines, the vanity of which Doctrines is discovered in five things. 312, 313

The last Doctrine.

That the Office of a faithfull Minister is an honourable Office.

Two things are premised for a right understanding of the Point. 314, 315

Seven things speak them out to be honourable.

1 The several worthy Names and Titles that are given them in Scripture, speak them out to be honourable.

2 Their work is honourable.

3 They are fellow-labourers with God, in the salvation of sinners. And what greater honour, then to be a co-worker with God?

4 The honourable account that God hath of them, speaks out their Office to be honourable.

5 They serve an honourable Master.

6 Their very work and service is honourable.

7 Their reward is honourable. 316 to 319

2 What honour that is that is due to faithful Ministers, shewed in three things.

1 Honourable Countenance is due to them. 319 to 321

2 Honourable Maintenance. 321, 322

3 Honourable Obedience. 322 to 324

A short Use. 324

Quest. *How must Christians honour their faithful Ministers.*

Shewed in five things.

1 By hearing them, and giving credit to their Messages, which they deliver from the Lord. 324, 325

The Contents.

- 2 By standing fast in the Doctrine of the Lord delivered by them. 321
3 By being followers of them, so far as they are followers of Christ. 321
4 By hearing them upon your hearts, when you are in the Mount. 321
5 By adhering to them, and abiding with them, in all their Tryals, &c. 326
The life of all. 326--ult.

Christian Reader,

BE pleased to passe by, or to Correct with
thy Pen, some faults that have escaped by
reason of the Authors absence from the Press.

March 26. 1655.

Imprimatur.

Joseph Caryl.

Book

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O R,

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2 Hea-

2 *Heaven on Earth.*

O R,

A serious Discourse, touching a well-grounded Assurance of mens everlasting happiness and blessedness; discovering the nature of Assurance, the possibility of attaining it, the Causes, Springs, and Degrees of it, with the resolution of several weighty questions; on *Romans* 8. 32, 33, 34. verses.

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O R,

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A N D,

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O R,

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The Godly Mans Ark, OR,

City of Refuge, in the day of his distress, discovered in divers Sermons; The first of which was preached at the Funeral of Mistris *Elizabeth Moor*.

Whereunto are annexed Mistris *Moors* evidences for Heaven, composed and collected by her in the time of her health, for her comfort in the time of sickness. By *Ed. Calamy*, B.D. and Pastor of the Church at *Aldermanbury*.

Helps to understand, and improve the Holy Scriptures, for our spiritual Profit, Comfort, and Stability.

Viz. Scripture

} Prophecies.
} Promises.
} Precepts.
} Threatnings.

By *Robert Perrot*, Minister of Gods word.

The Expert Physitian.

Learnedly treating of all Agues and Feavers essential, whether simple or compound, confused, Erratick and malignant, shewing their different Nature, Cause, Sign, and Cure; written originally by that famous Dr. in Physick, *Bricius Banderon*, and translated into English by Dr. *Wells*, Licentiate in Physick, by the University of *Oxford*.

To be sold by *John Hancock*, at the first shop in *Popes head-Alley*, next to *Cornhill*.

The object of this work is to show that the

principles of the theory of numbers are

the same as those of the theory of

algebra. It is shown that the theory of numbers is a special case of the theory of algebra, and that the principles of the theory of numbers are the same as those of the theory of algebra. The theory of numbers is a special case of the theory of algebra, and the principles of the theory of numbers are the same as those of the theory of algebra.

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THE
Unsearchable Riches
OF
CHRIST.

E P H E S. 3. 8.

Unto me who am lesse then the least of all Saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles, the Unsearchable Riches of Christ.

Unto me who am lesse then the least of all Saints,



HE Greek is a Comparative made of a Superlative. *Lesse then the least of all Saints*, is a double diminutive, and signifies lesser then the least, if lesser might be. Here you have the greatest Apostle descending down to the lowest step of humility. Great Paul is least of Saints, last of the Apostles, and greatest of sinners. The choicest Buildings have the lowest foundations, the best Balsom sinks to the bottom; those ears of Corn, and boughes of Trees that are most fill'd, and best laden, bow lowest. So do those souly that are most loaden with the fruits of Paradise. *Unto me who am lesse then the least of all Saints,*

B

Minimissimus.
Etius.

Qui parvus est in reputatione propria magnus est in reputatione divina.
Gregory. He that is little in his own account, is great in Gods esteem.

The Unsearchable Riches of Christ.

עֲלֵינוּ הַחֵן
 חֲסִידֵינוּ
 חֲסִידֵינוּ is al-
 ways taken in
 Scripture for
 a free gift, a
 grace gift:
 but חֲסִידֵינוּ is
 taken not on-
 ly for the fa-
 vour of God,
 but also for
 his gracious
 gifts.

עֲלֵינוּ הַחֵן
 חֲסִידֵינוּ

חֲסִידֵינוּ
 חֲסִידֵינוּ

Mat. 25. 32.
 Chap. 28. 19.

John II. 48.
 50, 51.

Act: 10. 22.

*Ipse unus erit
 tibi omnia quia
 in ipso uno bo-
 na, bona sunt
 omnia.* Aug.
 One Christ
 will be to
 thee instead

of all things
 else, because
 in him are all
 good things
 to be found.

Gal. 1. 16.

Non Christus

*nec calum pa-
 tur hypocri-
 tem. A man
 cannot hy-
 perbolise in
 speaking of
 Christ and*

Is this grace given.

In the Greek, or *was this grace given.* The word that's here rendred *Grace*, is taken in Scripture not only for the fa-
 vour of God, but also for his gracious gifts; and so you are
 to understand it in this place. Grace is taken for the gifts of
 grace, and they are two-fold, Common, or Special. Some
 are common to believers and hypocrites; as knowledge,
 tongues, a gift of Prayer, &c. some are special and peculiar
 to the Saints, as fear, love, faith, &c. Now Paul had all
 these, the better to fit him for that high and noble service to
 which he was call'd.

That I should Preach.

That is, declare good news, or glad tidings. The Greek
 word answers to the Hebrew word which signifies good
 news, glad tidings, and a joyfull message.

That I should Preach among the Gentiles.

Sometimes this Greek word is generally used for all men,
 or for all Nations. Sometimes the word is used more especi-
 ally for the people of the Jews. Sometimes 'tis used for the
 Gentiles distinguished from the Jews, so 'tis used, *Mat. 6. 32.*
For after all these things do the Gentiles seek, And so 'tis used
 here. Those that are without God in the world, that stand
 in arms against God, that are ignorant of these riches of
 grace that are in Christ; this grace is given to me, that I
 should preach among the poor Heathens, *the unsearchable
 riches of Christ.*

That I might Preach among the Gentiles. What? my self?
 No, but

The unsearchable riches of Christ.

The Greek word signifies, Not to be traced out. Here's
 Rhetorick indeed! here's riches, unsearchable riches, un-
 searchable riches of Christ. Riches always imply two things.

1. Abundance. 2. Abundance of such things as be of worth.
 Now in the Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest riches, the
 best riches, the choicest riches, in Christ are riches of Justifi-
 cation, *Tit. 2. 14.* in Christ are riches of Sanctification, *Phil.*
4. 12, 13. in Christ are riches of Consolation, *2 Cor. 12. 9.*
 and in Christ are riches of Glorification, *1 Per. 1.* But of
 these

these glorious unsearchable riches of Christ, we shall speak hereafter.

I shall begin at this time with the first words, *Unto me who am lesse then the least of all Saints.* There are these two Observations that naturally flow from these words.

First,

That the most holy men are alwayes the most humble men.

None so humble on earth, as those that live highest in Heaven.

Or if you will, take the Observation thus.

That those that are the most highly valued, and esteemed of by God, are lowest and least in their own esteem.

Unto me who am lesse then the least of all Saints, &c.

The second Observation is,

That there are weak Saints as well as strong, little Saints as well as great.

Or thus,

All Saints are not of an equall growth, or stature.

I shall begin with the first Observation, That the most holy men are alwayes the most humble men. Souls that are the most highly esteemed and valued by God, doe set the least and lowest esteem upon themselves. *Unto me who am lesse then the least of all Saints, &c.*

In the handling of this Point, I shall do these three things.

- 1 I shall prove that the most holy souls are alwayes the most humble souls.
- 2 I shall shew you the Properties of souls truly humble.
- 3 I shall shew you the Reasons why those that are the most highly prized and esteemed of God, do set so low a price upon themselves.

And then the Use.

For the first, That this is so, I shall give you most clear proofs, and open them to you.

See it in *Job*, no man ever received a fairer, or a more valuable certificate under the hand of God; or the broad Seal of heaven, for his being a soul famous in grace and holiness, then *Job*, as you may see, *Job 1. 8. And the Lord said unto*

Heaven.
Omnis bonus in summo bono.
All good is in the chiefest good.

1 Observ.

2 Observ.

Job was a None-such in regard of those perfections and degrees of grace that he had attained to beyond a

ny other
Saints on
earth.

Job was high
in worth, and
humble in
heart.

*Humilitas ani-
mi sublimitas
Christiani.*

ORON
ORON

*A me, me salua
Domine. Aug.*
Deliver me O
Lord from
that evil man
my self.

2 Cor. 12. 1.
to 7. Vide
Bezan.

*in uera appa-
ra.* Wordlesse
words such
as words are
too weak to
utter.

The clearest
sight & vision
of God does
alwayes give
a man the ful-
lest sight of his
own empti-
ness, sinful-
ness, and no-
thingnesse.

VDON
VDON

I am cut off.

*Arise, arise, arise,
a sinner, a
very misere-
and con-
pound of dirt
and sin.*

Satan, hast thou considered my Servant Job, that there is none like him in the Earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil. And yet no man could speak more undervaluingly of himself, then Job did, Job. 42. 5, 6. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee, I abhor my self in dust and ashes. This expression is the deepest act of abhorrency. Abhorrency strictly taken, is hatred wound up to the height. *I abhor my self.* The word that's rendred *Abhor*, signifies to reject, to disdain, to contemn, and to cast off. Ah sayes Job, I abhor my self, I reject my self, I disdain my self, I cast off my self, I have a vile esteem of my self. So our blessed Apostle, who had been caught up into the third Heavens, and had such glorious Revelations as could not be uttered, yet he accounted himself lesse then the least of all Saints. Not that any thing can be lesse then the least, the Apostles holy Rhetorick doth not crosse *Aristotles* Philosophy; but the Original word being a double diminutive, his meaning is that he was as little as could be; therefore he put himself down so little, as could not be lesse then the least.

Another proof you have, *Isa. 6. 1, 5, 6.* As *Paul* among the Apostles was the greatest, so *Esaie* among the Prophets was the clearest & choicest Gospel-Preacher, and holds our more of Christ, and of his Kingdome and glory, then all the other Prophets do. *Isa. 6. 1.* He sees the glory of the Lord in a Vision, and this makes him cry out, *Ver. 5. Wo is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts. I am undone.* The Hebrew is, *I am cut off, I am a forlorn man, why? For I have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.* Here you have the highest and choicest among the Prophets (as you had *Paul* before among the Apostles) abasing and laying low himself.

So *Peter*, *Luke 5. 8.* Depart from me, for I am a sinfull man, O Lord. When he saw that glorious Miracle wrought by the Lord Jesus, he cryes out as one very sensible of his own weakness and sinfulness. Depart from me, for I am a sinfull man. Ah I am not worthy to be near such Majesty and glory.

glory, who am a meere bundle of vice and vanity, of folly and iniquity.

Take another cleer instance, *Gen. 18. And Abraham answered, and said, Behold I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but dust and ashes.* Here you have the Father of the faithful, the greatest believer in the world, accounting himself dust and ashes. Dust notes the baseness of his Original, and Ashes notes his deserving to be burnt to ashes, if God should deal with him in Justice, rather than in Mercy. The nearer any soul draws to God, the more humble will that soul lye before God. None so neer God as the Angels, nor none so humble before God as the Angels.

So *Jacob, Gen. 32. 10. I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant,* &c. *Jacob* a man eminent in his prevailing with God, a Prince that had the honour and the happiness to overcome the God of mercy, yet judges himself unworthy of the least mercy. Ah, how low is that soul in his own eyes, that is most honourable in Gods eyes?

David you know was a man after Gods own heart, a man highly honoured, much beloved, and dearly prized by the Lord, yet *1 Sam. 26. 20.* he counts himself a Flea, and what is more contemptible then a Flea? In *Psal. 22. 6. I am a worm* (saith he) *and no man.* The word that's there rendred *Worm*, is a word that signifies a very little Worm which breedeth in Scarler, a Worm that's so little that a man can hardly see or perceive it. A Worm is the most despicable creature in the world, trampled under foot by every one. Sayes he, I am a despicable Worm in my own eyes, and in my enemies eyes.

And thus you see the Point proved, That the most holy men have been alwayes the most humble men.

The second thing that I am to doe, is, To shew you the Properties of humble souls. I confesse, when I look abroad in the world, & observe the carriage of all sorts of men, my heart is stir'd to speak as fully and as home to this Point, as Christ shall help me. 'Tis very, very sad to consider, how few humble souls there be in these days. Ah, the damnable pride

Verf. 27.
TENI TBV
Gnapbar ver-
phar, dust and
ashes, e. base,
vile, worthless
Solemnly
think that
thou art dust
and ashes, and
be proud if
thou canst.

Ifa. 6. 1, 2.
I am less then
all mercies, to
wit, in worth
or weight,
&c.

1 Kings 19. 5.

my lym
Telagmab.
An humble
soul is a lit-
tle, little, no-
thing in his
own eye.

God loves to hear this as a parcel of his praise.

*Parcere subje-
cto et debellare
superbis,*
to spare the
lowly and
strike down
the proud.

2 Cor. 12. 1,

2, 3, 4.

1 Tim. 1. 13.

Chrysostome
observes it of
Paul, as his
greatest ho-
nour, that al-
though he
had obtained
pardon of
God for his
sins, yet he is
not ashamed
to reckon
them up to
the world.

The Spouse
of Christ, un-
der all the
kisses & em-
braces of
Christ, ac-
knowledges
her self to be
black.

Cant. 1. 2. 5.
compared.

*Omnia mecum
porto.* All
my Goods I
carry with
me.

pride that reigns & rules in the hearts & lives of most men. I think, 'tis far greater then hath been known in the Generations before us. Ah *England! England!* what folly, what damnable wickedness is this, that thou shouldst be a lifting thy self up in pride, when God is a staining the pride of all glory, and bringing into contempt the honourable of the earth, and a setting his feet upon the neck of pride.

Now the first Property that I shall lay down of an humble soul, is this, An humble soul under the highest spiritual discoveries, & under the greatest outward mercies, forgets not his former sinfulness, and his former outward meannesses. Paul had been taken up into the third Heavens, & had glorious revelations and manifestations of God, he cries out, *I was a Blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious.* Under the choicest discoveries, he remembers his former blasphemies. So *Rom.*

7. 23. *I see a Law in my members warring against the Law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the Law of sin, which is in my members.* He had been at this time about fourteen years converted, as some judge. He was a man that lived at as high a rate in God, as any we read of, a man that was filled with glorious discoveries and revelations, and yet under all discoveries and revelations, he remembers that body of sin and death that made him cry out, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me? Who shall ease me of my burden, who shall knock off these chains that make my life a hell? I will by a few instances prove the other branch, Gen. 32. 10. I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies (saves Jacob) for with my staffe I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.*

I remember saith he, when I went over Jordan, I was as a footman that carried all his wealth with him. Under his outward greatness he forgets not his former meanness. An humble soul is good at looking back upon his former low estate, upon his thred-bare Coat that was his best and only Robe.

So David, 1 Chron: 17. 16, 17. *And David the King came and (as before the Lord, and said, What am I O Lord God, and what is mine house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God; for thou hast*

hast also spoken of thy servants house for a great while to come, and hast regarded me according to the state of a man of high degree. *Who am I O Lord God, and what is mine house?* David remembered the meannesse of his birth, he remembered his Shepherds Crook, as Jacob did his Travelling Staff. Mercies make an humble soul glad, but not proud. An humble soul is lowest when his mercies are highest; he is least, when he is greatest; he is lowest when he is highest; he is most poor, when he is most rich. Nothing meets like mercy, nothing draws like mercy, nothing humbles like mercy; mercy gives the humble soul such excellent counsel, as *Plasilla* the Empress gave her husband *Theodosius*, Remember O husband (saith she) what lately you were, and what now you are, so shall you govern well the Empire, and give God his due praise for so great an advancement. The voice of mercy is, Remember what lately thou wert, and what now thou art, and be humble. Now proud men that are lifted up from the dunghill, that abound in worldly wealth, ah how do's their blood rise with their outward good? the more mercies they have, the more proud they are, mercies do but puff and swell such souls. In a crowd of mercies, they cry out in the pride of their hearts, Depart from us O God, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what profit shall we have, if we pray unto him?

A second Property of an humble soul, is this, he overlooks his own righteousness, and lives upon the righteousness of another, to wit, the Lord Jesus. So the Apostle, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9, 10, overlooks his own righteousness, and lives wholly upon the righteousness of Christ. *I desire to be found in him,* (saith he) *not having mine own righteousness,* (away with it, it's dross, it's dung, it's dogs-meat, 'tis a rotten righteousness, an imperfect righteousness, a weak righteousness) *which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:* That is a spotlesse righteousness, a pure righteousness, a compleat righteousness, an incomparable righteousness: And therefore an humble soul overlooks his own righteousness, and lives upon Christs righteousness. Remember this, all the sighing,

Abigail

mourning,

said *Bian*, one of the seven wise men of *Greece*.

1 Chron. 17.

16, 17.

Iphicrates that noble Capt.

cried out,

From how

small to how

great an E-

state am I raised?

So does the humble

soul, when

God turns

his Brasse into

Silver, his

Iron into

Gold, his

Pence into

Pounds.

Agathocles

who of a Pot-

ters Son was

made King of

Sicily, would

always be

served in ear-

then vessels.

Psal. 73. 3. 10

13. *Iob* 21. 7.

to 16. *Veri.*

14, 15.

V. 2. an Cane

Dogs-meat,

i. e. courie

and contemptible.

Isa. 64. 6.

Cant. 4. 2.

Rev. 14. 5.

Col. 2. 10.

Mat. 6. 8.
Chap. 23.

Isa. 58.
Vers. 3.

Isa. 50. 11.
Rom. 10. 4.

Psal. 143. 2.

Iob 9. 15.

Luke 18. 11, 12.
A proud
heart eyes
more his see-
ming worth,
then his reall
want.
Non docet.
Christianum in
hac vita coro-
nari, said the
Christian
Souldier.

mourning, sobbing, and complaining in the world, doth not so undeniable evidence a man to be humble, as his overlook-
ing his own righteousness, and living really & purely upon
the righteousness of Christ. This is the greatest demonstra-
tion of humility that can be shewn by man. Men may do
much, hear much, pray much, fast much, & give much, &c.
& yet be as proud as Lucifer, as you may see in the Scribes,
Pharisees, and those in Isa. 58. who in the pride of their
hearts made an Idol of their own righteousness. *Wherefore
have we fasted (say they) and thou seest it not? wherefore have we
afflicted our souls, and thou takest no knowledge?* O! but for a
man now to trample upon his own righteousness, and to
live wholly upon the righteousness of another, this speaks
out a man to be humble indeed. There is nothing that the
heart of man stands more averse to, then this, of coming off
from his own righteousness. Man is a creature apt to warm
himself with the sparks of his own fire, though he doth lye
down for it in (Eternall) sorrow. Man is naturally prone
to go about to establish his own righteousness, that he
might not subject to the righteousness of Christ; he will
labour as for life, to lift up his own righteousness, and to
make a Saviour of it. I but an humble soul disclaims his
own righteousness, *All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. En-
ter not into judgement with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man
living be justified.* So Job, *Though I were righteous, yet I would
not answer, but I would make supplication to my Judge.* Proud
Pharisees blesse themselves in their own righteousness.
I thank God I am not as this Publ' can, I fast twice in the week, &c.
I but now a soule truly humbled blushes to see his owne
righteousness, and glories in this, that he has the righteou-
ness of Christ to live upon. Rev. 4. 10, 11. the twenty four
Elders throw down their Crowns at the feet of Christ. By
their Crowns you may understand their gifts, the'r excel-
lencies, their righteousness; they throw down these be-
fore Christs Throne; to note to us, that they did not pu-
confidence in them, and that Christ was the Crown of
Crowns, and the top of all their Royalty and glory. An
humble soul looks upon Christs righteousness as his only
Crown.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The lowest & the meanest good work is not below a humble soul. An humble David will dance before the Ark, be enjoyed so much of God in it, that it caused him to leap and dance before it: but Michal his wife despised him for a fool, and counted him as a simple vain fellow, looking upon his marriage as vain and light, and not becoming the majesty and glory of so glorious a Prince. Well says this humble soul, if this be to be vile, I will be more vile.

Paul, yet being humble and low in his own eyes, he stooped to do service to the least and the meanest Saints. 1 Cor. 9. 20, 21. *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews, to them that are under the Law, as under the Law, that I might gain them that are under the Law: to them that are without Law, as without Law (being not without Law to God, but under the Law to Christ) that I might gain them that are without Law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means gain some.* Here you have an humble soul bowing and stooping to the meanest Saints, & the lowest services, that he might win souls. So the Lord Jesus himself was famous in this, John 13. 4. *Though he was the Lord of glory, and one that thought it no robbery to be equal with God, one that had all perfection and fullness in himself, yet the lowest work is not below this King of Kings witness he's washing his Disciples feet, & wiping them with a Towel.*

Bonaventur, though he was born of great Parentage, and a great Schollar, yet to keep his mind from swelling, he would often sweep rooms, wash vessels, and make beds.

So that famous Italian Marquis, when God was pleased by the Ministry of his word to convert him, the lowest work was not below him; though he might have liv'd like a King in his own Country, yet having tasted of that life and sweet that was in Jesus, he was so humble that he would go to market, and carry home the meanest, and the poorest things he Market y^elded. There was nothing below him when God had chang'd him, and humbled him.

Vain signifies to gain with joy and delight of heart. As says Paul, *as my greatest joy, my greatest delight to gain souls to Christ.*

The word also signifies craft or guile. As humble Paul will use a holy craft, a holy guile to win souls.

To know the art of Aims is greater than to be crown'd with the Diadem of Kings, & yet to convert one soul, is greater then to pour out ten thousand Talents into the baskets of the poor.

Chrysostome, 1 John 4.

1 Cor. 2. 8.

Phil. 2. 6.

Col. 1. 19, 2. 3.

1 John 3. 2.

Proud hearts can't stoop to low services.

they say this work & that

is below their

parts, place,

parentage, &

employments

Gladius, Septem
These Hea-
thens will
rise in judg-
ment against
many proud
professors in
these dayes,
who seem to
stoop to mean
services, &c.
Veni, veniat
verum Domi-
ni; & subita
veniat illi: des-
certa est nobis
offens colla;
Said Balda-
zar a German Mi-
nistre. So 'tis
with all that
are high in
worth, & hu-
ble in heart.
Lev. 10. 2, 3.
God will be
sanctified ei-
ther actively,
or passively
(*aut a nobis*
aut in nobis) ei-
ther in us, or
upon us.

The word of
ten signifies a
modest quiet-
ness of mind,
the troubled
affections be-
ing allayed.
So here, in
Lev. 2. 27, 28,
10. it signifies
to submit un-

This is recorded to the glory of some ancient Generals, that they were able to call every common Souldier by his own name, and were careful to provide money, not only for their Captains and Souldiers, but likewise for the meanest beast. There is not the lowest good that is below, but a humble soul. If the work be good, though never so low, humility will put a hand to it; so will not pride.
A fourth Property of an humbled heart is this, An humble heart will submit to every truth of God, that is made known to it; even to those divine truths, that are most cross to flesh and blood. 1 Sam. 3. 17 Eli would fain know what God had discovered to Samuel concerning him; Samuel tells him, that he must break his neck, that the Priesthood must be taken away from him, & his Sons must be slain in the warre: why is it the Lord (saith he) let him do what seemeth him good. So in Leviticus 10, the Lord by fire from Heaven destroyes Aarons two Sons, Then Moses said unto Aaron, this is that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified; and Aaron held his peace. If God misse of his honour one way, he will rain hell out of Heaven, but he will have it another way; this Aaron knew, and therefore he held his peace, when God shewed himself to be a consuming fire. The Hebrew word that is here rendered Peace, signifies the quietnesse and silence of his mind; he did not hold his tongue only (for many a man may hold his tongue, and yet his mind and heart may kick and swell against God) but his very mind was quiet and still; there was a heavenly calm in his Spirit, he was dumb and silent because the Lord had done it. So in Acts 10. 33. We are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. We are not here to hear what may tickle our ears, or please our fancies, or satisfie our lusts; no, but we are here to hear what God will say, our hearts stand ready pressed to subject themselves to whatever God shall declare to be his will; we are willing to hear that we may do, that we may obey sincerely and universally the good pleasure of our God, knowing that 'tis as well our dignity as our duty so to doe.

There

undantia, and
plenitudo re-
duntantia.

Om. e. bonum in
summa bono,

All good is in
the chiefeft
good.

Christ is quic-
quid appetibile
as Origen
speaks, what-
ever we can
desire.

Iſa: 58. 2. 7.

Luke 7. 45, 6,

7.
A proud heart
reſiſts, and is
reſiſted, this
is duro durum,
ſint to ſint,
fire to fire.
Job 13. 25.

An humble
ſoule bleſſes
God as well
for croſſes, as
mercies; as
well for ad-
verſity as for
proſperity; as
well for
frowns, as for
ſmiles, &c.
because he
judges him-
ſelf unworthy,
of the leaſt
rebukes from
God.

his ſtock of Graces, his ſtock of Comforts, his ſtock of expe-
riences are in the hands of Jeſus Chriſt, who is the Great
Lord Keeper of all a Believers Graces, & of all his Comforts,
and therefore as Children live upon them in whoſe hand
their ſtock is, be it a brother or a friend: Why, ſo an humble
ſoule ſees its ſtock is in the hand of the Lord Jeſus, & there-
fore he lives upon Chriſt, upon his love, and his proviſion,
and his undertakings, &c. But now proud hearts live not
upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, they live upon themſelves, and
upon their own duties, their own righteouſneſſe, their own
aſtings, as the Scripture evidences. Chriſt dwells in that
heart moſt eminently, that hath emptied it ſelfe of it ſelfe.
Chriſt is the humble mans *Manna*, upon which he lives, and
by which he thrives..

A ſixth Property of an humble ſoule is this, He judges
himſelf to be below the wrath and judgements of God. An
humble ſoule looks upon himſelfe as one not worthy that
God ſhould ſpend a rod upon him, in order to his reformation,
edification, or ſalvation. As I am unworthy, ſaith an
humble ſoule, that God ſhould ſmile upon me, ſo I am un-
worthy that he ſhould ſpend a frown upon me. Job 13. 25.
*Wilt thou break a leaf driven too and fro? & wilt thou purſue the dry
ſtubble?* Why I am but a leaf, I am but a little dry ſtubble, I
am below thy wrath, I am ſo very, very bad, that I wonder
that thou ſhouldeſt ſo much as ſpend a rod upon me. What
more weak, worthleſſe, ſlight, and contemptible then a
leaſe then dry ſtubble? why Lord, ſayes Job, I am a poor,
weak and worthleſſe Creature, I wonder that thou ſhouldeſt
take any pains to do me good, I can't but count and call
every thing a mercy that is leſſe then hell.

So David, in 1 Sam. 24. 14: *After whom is the King of Iſrael
come out? after whom doſt thou purſue? after a dead Dog, after a
Flea.* The language of an humble ſoule when God begins to
be angry, is this, Lord I can bleſſe thee that thou wilt take
any pains with me; but I humbly acknowledge that I am
below the leaſt rod, I am not worthy that thou ſhouldeſt
frown upon me, threaten me, ſtrike me, or whip me, for
my internal and eternal good. But proud hearts think
themſelves

themselves wronged when they are afflicted, they cry out with *Cain*, *Our punishment is greater then we can bear.*

Gen. 4.13.

A seventh Property of an humble soul is this, An humble soul doth highly prize the least o. Christ. The least smile the least good word, the least good look, the least truth, the least mercy is highly valued by an humble soul.

The *Cananitish* woman in the 15 of *Matthew*, sets a high price upon a crum of mercy. Ah Lord sayes the humble soul, if I may not have a loaf of mercy, give me a piece of mercy? if not a piece of mercy, give me a crum of mercy? If I may not have Sun-light, let me have Moon-light? if not Moon-light, let me have star-light? if not star-light, let me have candle-light? and for that I will blesse thee.

Verf. 27.

Faith will pick an Argument out of a repulse, and turn discouragements into encouragements.

In the time of the Law, the meanest things that were consecrated, were very highly prized, as *leather*, or *wood*, that was in the Tabernacle. An humble soul looks upon all the things of God as consecrated things. Every truth of God is a consecrated truth, 'tis consecrated to holy use, & this causes the soul highly to prize it; and so every smile of God, & every discovery of God, and every drop of mercy from God, is very highly prized by a soul that walks humbly with God. The name of Christ, the voice of Christ, the foot-steps of Christ, the least touch of the garment of Christ, the least regarded truth of Christ, the meanest and least regarded among the flock of Christ, is highly prized by humble souls that are interested in Christ. An humble soul cannot, an humble soul dares not call any thing little that has Christ in it; neither can an humble soul call or count any thing great wherein he sees not Christ, wherein he enjoys not Christ. An humble soul highly prizes the least nod, the least love-token, the least courtesie from Christ; but proud hearts count great mercies small mercies, and small mercies, no mercies; yea pride do's so unman them, that they often call mercy, misery, &c.

Luther would not take all the world for one leaf of the Bible, such a price he set upon it, from the sweet that he found it.

Song 1. 3.

John 10. 45.

Psalm 27. 4.

Mat. 9. 20. 21.

Acts 24. 14.

1 Cor. 9. 22.

Austin loved

Tully before

his conversion,

but not so

much after

(*quia nomen*

Jesus non erat

ibi) because

the name of

Christ was

not there.

The eighth Property of an humble soul is this, It can never be good enough, it can never pray enough, nor hear enough, nor mourn enough, nor believe enough, nor love enough, nor fear enough, nor joy enough, nor repent enough, nor loath sin enough, nor be humble enough, &c. Humble

Phil. 3. 11, 12.
13. 14.

απειρομαχον
it signifies the
straining of
the whole bo-
dy, a stretch-
ing out head
and hands, as
runners in a
race do, to lay
hold on the
mark or price
proposed.

Psal. 10. 17.
Desires.

αμωαν. from
αμωω, that sig-
nifies to de-
sire and long
after a thing
as to have
ones teeth
water at it,
so in *Psalm* 7. 1.
But proud
hearts sit
down and
pride them-
selves & bless
themselves as
if they had
attained to
much, when
they have at-
tain'd to no-
thing that
can raise them
above the
lowest step of
misery.

Rev. 3. 17.

Isa. 65. 5.

Luke 18. 11, 12.

Humble *Paul* looks upon his great all as nothing at all, he forgets those things that are behind, and reaches forth to those things which are before, *I have if by any means he might attain unto the resurrection of the dead*; that is, that perfection of holiness which the dead shall attain unto in the morning of the resurrection; by a Metonymic of the subject for the adjunct.

No holiness below that matchless, peerless, spotless, perfect holiness that Saints shall have in the glorious day of Christs appearing, will satisfy this humble soul. An humble heart is an aspiring heart, he can't be contented to get up some rounds in *Jacobs Ladder*, but he must get to the very top of the Ladder, to the very top of holiness. An humble heart can't be satisfied with so much Grace as will bring him to glory, with so much of Heaven as will keep him from dropping into Hell, he is still crying out, Give Lord, give, give me more of thy self, more of thy Son, more of thy Spirit, give me more light, more life, more love, &c. *Cesar* in warlike matters, minded more what was to conquer, then what was to conquer; what was to gain then what was gained: So does an humble soul mind more what he should be, then what he is, what is to be done, then what is done. Verily Heaven is for that man, and that man is for Heaven, that sets up for his mark the perfection of holiness. Poor men are full of desires, they are often a sighing it out, O that we had bread to strengthen us, drink to refresh us, cloths to cover us, friends to visit us, & houses to shelter us, &c. So souls that are spiritually poor, they are often a sighing it out, O that we had more of Christ to strengthen us, more of Christ to refresh us, more of Christ to be a covering & shelter to us, &c. I had rather, says the humble soul, be a poor man and a rich Christian, then a rich man & a poor Christian. Lord says the humble soul, I had rather do any thing, I had rather bear any thing, I had rather be any thing, then to be a Dwarf in Grace. The light & glory of humble Christians rises by degrees, *ant. 6. 1. 1.* Looking forth as the morning, with a little light. 2. Fair as the Moon, more light. 3. Clear as the sun, &c. Come up to a higher degree of spiritual light, life

and

and glory, Lord says the humble soul, give me much grace and then a little gold will serve my turn, give me much of Heaven, and little of earth will content me; give me much of the Springs above, and a little of the Springs below will satisfie me, &c.

The ninth Property of an humble soul is this, It will smite and strike for small sins, as well as for great, for those the world count no sin, as well as for those that they count grosse sins.

When David had but cut off the lap of *Sauls* garment his heart smote him as if he had cut off his head. The Hebrew word signifies to smite, wound, or chastize. Ah! his heart struck him, his heart chastised him, his heart wounded him for cutting off *Sauls* skirt, though he did it upon noble grounds, viz. to convince *Saul* of his false jealousies, and to evidence his own innocency & integrity. And so, at another time, his heart smote him for numbring the people, as if he had murdered the people, 2 Sam. 24. 10. And Davids heart smote him, after that he had numbred the people; and David said unto the Lord, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: And now I beseech thee, O Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant, for I have done very foolishly. An humble soul knows that little sins (if I may so call any) cost Christ his blood, and that they make way for greater, & that little sins multiplied become great, as a little sum multiplied is great; that they cloud the face of God, wound conscience, grieve the spirit, rejoyce Satan, and make work for Repentance, &c. An humble soul knows that little sins (suppose them so) are very dangerous; a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump; a little flasse may kill one, a little poyson may poyson one, a little leak in a ship, sinks it; a little Flye in the box of Ointment spoils it; a little flaw in a good cause, marrs it: So a little sin may at once barre the door of Heaven, and open the gates of Hell; and therefore an humble soul smites and strikes it selfe for the least, as well as the greatest. Though a head of Garlike be little, yet it will poyson the Leopard, though he be great. Though a Mouse is but little, yet it will kill an Elephant, if he gets up into his Trunk. Though the Scorpion be little,

1 Sam. 24.

וַיִּכּוֹת דָּוִד אֶת־

A good mans heart when kindly smitten.

smite him for those actions that at first he judged very prudent and politick.

How great a paine net to be horncomes from the prick of this small thorn.

Little sinnes have put several to their wits ends, when they have been set home upon their consciences.

little,

little yet it will sting a *Lyon* to death, and so will the least sin, it not pardoned by the death of Christ.

A proud heart counts great sins small, and small sins no sins, and so disarms Conscience (for a time) of its whipping and wounding power; but at death, or in Hell, conscience will take up an iron rod, with which it will lash the sinner for ever; and then though too late, the sinner shall acknowledge his little sins to be very great, and his great sins to be exceeding grievous and odious, &c.

The tenth Property of a humble soul is this, It will quietly bear burdens, and patiently take blows & knocks, and make no noise. An humble soul sees God through man, he sees God through all the actions and carriages of men. *I was dumb* (saith the Prophet) *I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.* An humble soul looks through secondary causes, & sees the hand of God, and then lays his own hand upon his mouth. An humble soul is a *mute* soul, a *tongue-tied* soul, when he looks through secondary causes, to the supreme cause. So *Aaron*, when he saw his sons suddenly surprized by a dreadful and doleful death, he held his peace, he bridled his passions, he sits silent under a terrible stroak of Divine Justice, because the fire that devoured them, went out from the Lord. So when *Samuel* had told *El*, that God would judge his house for ever, & that he had sworn that the iniquity of his house should not be purged with sacrifice, nor offering for ever, &c. *It is the Lord* (sayes *Eli*) *let him do what seemeth him good.* *Eli* humbly and patiently layes his neck upon the block, it is the Lord, let him strike, let him kill, &c. sayes *Eli*.

So *David*; when *Shimei* manifested his desperate fury and folly, malice and madnesse, in raving and raging at him, in cursing and reproaching of him, sayes he, *Let him alone, and let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him.* God (sayes he) will by his wise providence turn his cursing into blessing. I see the Justice of God in his cursing, therefore let him alone, let him curse sayes *David*.

Cassianus reports, that when a certain Christian was held Captive by the Infidels, and tormented by divers pains, and ignominious

Psal. 69.

101. 7. 1.

from Alam,

which signi-
fies a mute
or tongue-
tied.

Lev. 10. 1, 2, 3.

Validem from

Dama, which

signifies the

quietnesse of

the mind, the

troubled affe-

ctions being

allayed.

1 Sam. 3. 11, 13.

2 Sam. 16. 5, 14.

Gallius ob-

serves upon

Exod. 22. 28.

the exceed-

ing patience

of those three

Emperors,

Theodorus,

Honorius, and

Arcadius, to-

wards those

that spoke

evil of them.

ignominious taunts, being demanded by way of scorn and reproach, Tell us what Christ has done for you; answered, he hath done what you see, that I am not moved at all the cruelties and contumelies you cast upon me.

So that blessed Martyr, *Gyles of Brussels*, when the Fryers (sent to reduce him) did at any time miscall him, he ever held his peace; in so much that those wretches would say abroad, that he had a dumb Devil in him. Full Vessels will bear many a knock, many a stroke, and yet make no noise. So Christians that are full of Christ, that are full of the Spirit, will bear many a knock, many a stroke, and yet make no noise.

An humble soul may groan under afflictions, but he will not grumble in calms. Proud hearts discourse of patience, but in storms humble hearts exercise patience. Philosophers have much commended it, but in the hour of darkness 'tis the humble soul that acts it. I am afflicted, says the humble soul, but 'tis mercy I am not destroyed; I am fallen into the Pit, 'tis free grace I am not fallen into Hell. God is too just to wrong me, and too gracious to harm me, and therefore I will be still and quiet, let him do what he will with me, says the humble soul. But proud souls resist when they are resisted, they strike when they are stricken. *Who is the Lord* (says lofty Pharaoh) *that I should obey him?* and *Cain* cries out, *My punishment is greater then I am able to bear.* Well remember this, though it be not easie in afflictions and tribulations to hold our peace, yet 'tis very advantagious; which the Heathens seemed to imitate, in placing the Image of *Angerona* with the mouth bound, upon the Altar of *Voluptas*; to shew, that those that do prudently and humbly conceal their sorrows and anxieties by patience, shall attain comfort and refreshment.

The eleventh Property of an humble soul, is this, *In all Religious duties and services, he trades with God upon the credit of Christ.* Lord says the humble soul, Ineed power against such and such sins, give it me upon the credit of Christs blood, I need strength to such and such services, give it me upon the credit of Christs word. I need such & such mercies for the

D

cheering,

*As C Mon.
fol. 8u.*

By long soothing our own wills, we have forsaken (as *Cassian* saith) the very shadow of patience.

Isa. 58. 1, 2, 3.

Non sic Deus colimus aut sic vivimus, ut ille nos vinceret, said the Emperor Antonius Philosophus.

John 14. 13. & Ch. 15. 16. & 16. 23. 26. The name of Iesus hath a thousand treasures of joy and

comfort in it, saith *Chrysostome*. And is therefore used by *Paul* five hundred times as some have reckoned.

So *Thomas* & *others* did, when he sought the favour of *King Admetus*.

The name of a Saviour, saith *Bernard*, is honey in the mouth, & music in the ear, & life in the heart. The boy that was a Monitor, cryed aloud to him that rode in Triumph. *Memento te esse hominem. Remember thyself to be a man.*

Dan. 3. & c. 6.
Aes. 5. 41, 42.
Aes. 4. 29.
Heb. 11.
Eph. 6. 19, 20.
Phil. 1. 13, 19.

cheering, refreshing, quickning & strengthening of me, give them into my bosom upon the credit of Christs intercession. As a poor man lives and deals upon the credits of others; so does an humble soul, live and deal with God, for the strengthening of every grace, and for the supply of every mercy, upon the credit of the Lord Jesus. An humble soul knows, that since he broke with God in Innocency, God will trust him no more, he will take his word no more; and therefore when he goes to God for mercy, he brings his *Benjamin*, his Jesus in his armes, and pleads for mercy upon the account of Jesus.

Plutarch reports, that 'twas wont to be the way of the *Molossians*, when they would seek the favour of their Prince, they took up the Kings Son in their arms, and so went and kneeled before the King, and by this means overcame him. So do humble souls, make a conquest upon God, with Christ in their arms; the father will not give that soul the repulse, that brings Christ in his arms. The humble soule knows, that God out of Christ is incommunicable, that God out of Christ is incomprehensible, that God out of Christ is very terrible, and that God out of Christ is unaccessible; and therefore he still brings Christ with him, and presents all his requests in his name, & so prevails, &c. But proud souls deal with God upon the credit of their own worthiness, righteousness, services, prayers, tears, fastings, &c. as the proud *Pharisee*; and those wrangling Hypocrites in *Isa.* 58. 1, 2, 3.

'Twas a very proud saying of one (*Calum gratis non accipiam*) I will not have Heaven, but at a rate; and therefore well did the Father call vain-glory a pleasant Thief, and the sweet spoiler of spiritual excellencies.

The twelfth Property of an humble soul is this, *It endeavours more how to honour and glorifie God in afflictions, then how to get out of afflictions.* So *Daniel*; the three Children; the Apostles & those worthies, of whom this world was not worthy; they were not curious about getting out of affliction, but studious how to glorifie God in their afflictions. They were willing to be any thing, and to bear any thing, that in every thing God might be glorified. They made it their business

to glorifie God in the fire, in the Prison, in the Den, on the wrack, and under the sword, &c. Lord says the humble soul do but keep down my sins, and keep up my heart in a way of honouring of thee, under all my troubles, and then my troubles will be no troubles, my afflictions will be no afflictions. Though my burdens be doubled, and my troubles be multiplied, yet do but help me to honour thee, by believing in thee, by waiting on thee, and by submitting to thee, and I shall sing care away, I shall say 'tis enough.

When *Valens* the Emperour sent Messengers to win *Eusebious* to Heresie by fair words and large promises; he answered; Alas Sir, these speeches are fit to catch little Children that look after such things, but we that are taught, and nourished by the holy Scriptures, are readier to suffer a thousand deaths, then to suffer one syllable or tittle of the Scripture to be altered. And when the Emperour threatned to Confiscate his Goods, to torment him, to banish him, or to kill him; he answered, He need not fear Confiscation, that hath nothing to loose; nor banishment, to whom Heaven only is a Country; nor torments, when his body will be dashed with one blow; nor death, which is the only way to set him at liberty from sin and sorrow. O but when a proud man is under troubles and afflictions, his head & heart, are full of plots, and projects, how to get off his Chains, and to get out of the Furnace, &c. A proud heart will say any thing, and do any thing, and be any thing, to free himself from the burdens that presse him; as you see in *Pharaoh*, &c. But an humble soul is willing to bear the crosse, as long as he can get strength from Heaven; to kisse the crosse, to blesse God for the crosse, and to glorifie God under the crosse, &c.

The thirteenth Property of an humble soul, is this, *It seeks not, it looks not after great things*. A little will satisfie Nature, lesse will satisfie Grace, but nothing will satisfie a proud mans lusts; Lord, says the humble soul, if thou wilt but give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, thou shalt be my God, Let the men of the world (says the humble soul) take the world in all its greatnesse and glory, and divide it among themselves; let me have much of Christ & Heaven

Profer Satan est Lutherus, sed Christus vivit & regnat, Amen; said *Luther*, in writing to his friend *Spalatinus*.

Happy is that soul, and to be equalled with Angels, who is willing to suffer, if it were possible, as great things for Christ, as Christ hath suffered for it, said *Jerome*,

Job 1 20, 21.

Galen.

Gen. 28. 20, 21, 22.

Vir bonus paucis indiget.

Pfal. 4. 6, 7.
Prov. 30. 8.
Luther made
many a meal
of a Herring,
and Junius of
an Egge.

ונפלאות
(פס')

Pharuch.

in my heart, and food convenient to support my natural life, and it shall be enough, *Job 22. 29. When men are cast down, then thou shalt say there is lifting up: And he shall save the humble person, or as the Hebrew hath it (Ne shabbh gneaim) Him that hath low eyes:* Noting to us, that an humble soul looks not after high things. So in *Psal. 131. 1, 2. Lord my heart is no naughty, nor mine eyes lofty: (But how doe you know that David? why saves he) I doe not exercise my self in great matters, or in things too high, or too wonderfull for me. Surely, I behaved and quieted my self. Hebr. My soul is as a child that is weaned of his mother: My soul is even as a weaned child. As a great shooe fits not a little foot, nor a great sail a little ship, nor a great ring a little finger; so a great estate fits not a humble soul.*

It was a prudent speech of that *Indian King Taxiles*, to the invading *Alexander*; What should we need (said he) to fight and make war one with another, if thou comest not to take away our water and our necessities by which we must live, as for other Goods, if I be richer then thou, I am ready to give thee of mine; And if I have lesse, I will not think scorn to thank thee if thou wilt give me some of thine. Oh but proud *Absalom* can't be content to be the Kings Son, unlesse he may have the Crown presently from his Fathers head. *Cesar* can abide no Superiour; nor *Pompey* an equall. A proud soul is content with nothing.

A Crown could not content *Ahab*, but he must have *Naboths Vineyard*, though he swim to it in blood. *Diogenes* had more content with his Tub, to shelter him from the injuries of the weather, & with his wooden dish to eat & drink in; then *Alexander* had with the conquest of half the world; and the fruition of all the treasures, pleasures and glories of *Asia*. So an humble soul is more contented and satisfied with *Daniel's* pulse, and *John's* Coar, then proud Princes are with their glistering Crowns, and golden Scepters.

The fourteenth property of an humble soul is this, It can rejoyce in the graces and gracious a'ctings of others, as well as in its own. An humble *Moses* could say, when *Eldad* and *Medad* prophesied in the Camp, *Would God that all the Lords*
people

people were Prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them. So humble Paul in Acts 26. 29. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except those bonds. I heartily wish and pray for thine own sake, that not only in a low, but in an eminent degree, both thou and all that are here present, were as far Christians as I am: Only I would not wish them imprisoned, as I am. An humble soul is no churle; there is no envy in spiritual things, one may have as much of spirituals as another, and all alike. So in 1 Thess. 1. 2, 3. We give thanks to God allways for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing, your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our father. So in the 2 Epistle, 1. 2, 3, 4. Grace be unto you, and peace from God our father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, We are bound to thank God alwayes for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth: So that we our selves glory in you, in the Churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure. Ezekiel can commend Daniel, his contemporary, matching him with Noah and Job, for his power in prayer; and Peter highly praises Pauls Epistles, though he had been sharply reprov'd in one of them. O but proud souls will be still a casting disgrace and contempt upon those excellencies in others, that they want in themselves.

A proud Cardinal, in Luthers time, said, Indeed a reformation is needfull, and to be desired, but that Luther, a rascally Fryer should be the man should doe it, is intollerable. Pride is like certain Flies, called Cantharids, who light especially upon the fairest wheat, and the most blown Roses.

Though Licinius (who was j yned with Galerius in the Empire) was so ignorant that he could not write his own name, yet as Eusebius reports, he called the Liberal Arts a publick poyson.

This age is full of such monsters, that envy every light that outshines their own, and that throw dirt upon the graces and

Num. 11. 26. to 30.

עַל הַיָּדוֹת וְעַל הַתּוֹלָאֵם.

A little, and a great way.

The ancient Church had her Diptychs, or publick tables, wherein the persons most noted for piety, were recorded.

Plato called Aristotle the Intelligent Reader; and Aristotle set up an Altar in honour of Plato.

Ezek. 14. 14. 2 Pet. 3. 9c.

Cesar Borgias emulating & imitating Julius Caesar, did use to say, Aut Caesar, aut nullus. But not long after, he was slain in the Kingdom of Navarre.

and excellencies of others, that themselves may only shine. Pride is notable, both at Subtraction and at Multiplication. A proud heart always prizes himself above the market; he reckons his own pence for pounds, and others pounds for pence; he looks upon his own Counters as gold, and upon others gold as Counters. All Pearls are counterfeit, but what he wears.

The fiftenth Property of an humble soul, is, *He will rather bear wrongs, then revenge wrongs offered.* The humble soule knows that vengeance is the Lords, and that he will repay, &c. The humble soul loves not to take the sword in his own hand; he knows the day is a coming, wherein the Lord will give his enemies two blows for one, and here he rests. An humble soul, when wrongs are offered, is like a man with a sword in one hand, and a salve in the other; could wound, but will heal. *Psal. 35. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. False witnesses did rise up, they laid to my charge things that I knew not. They rewarded me evil for good, to the spoiling of my soul. But as for me, when they were sick, my cloathing was sackcloth, I humbled my soul with fasting, and my prayer returned into my own bosome. I behaved myself as though he had been my friend, or brother. I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother, &c.* The Scripture abounds in instances of this nature.

Dyonisius, having not very well used *Plato* at the Court, when he was gone, fearing least he should write against him, he sent after him to bid him not to write against him: Sayes he, *Tell Dyonisius that I have not so much leisure as to think of him.* So humble, wronged souls are not at leisure, to think of the wrongs, and injuries that others do them.

Mr. Fox, that wrote the Book of *Martyrs*, would be sure to do him a kindnesse, that had done him an injury: So that it used to be a Proverb, *If a man would have Mr. Fox doe him a kindnesse, let him do him an injury.* An humble soul, is often in looking over the wrongs and injuries that he ha's done to God, and the sweet & tender carriage of God towards him, notwithstanding those wrongs and injuries; and this wins him, and works him to be more willing and ready to bear

wrongs,

Psal. 94. 1.

Rom. 12. 19.
I may truly say
of the humble
soul, what *Tully*
said of *Cæsar*,
*Nihil obli-
visci soles, nisi
injurias* that
he forgot no-
thing but in-
juries.

*Augustus Cæ-
sar* (in whose
time *Christ*
was born) bid
Canullus the
railing Poet,
to supper, to
shew that he
had forgiven
him.

wrongs, and forgive wrongs, then to revenge any offered wrongs.

The sixteenth Property of an humble soul is this, An humble soul, though he be of never so rare abilities, yet he will not disdain to be taught what he knows not, by the meanest persons. A child shall lead the humble soul in the way that is good, he cares not how mean and contemptible the person is, if a guide, or an instructor to him.

Iſa. ii. 6.

Apollo, an Eloquent man, and mighty in the Scripture, a Master in *Israel*, and yet sits by an *Aquila*, a Tent-maker, and *Priscilla* his wife, to be instructed by them, *Acts* 18. 24, 25, 26. Sometimes the poorest, and the meanest Christian may, for counsel, and comfort, be a God to another; as *Moses* was to *Aaron*. As an humble soul knows, that the Starrs have their situation in Heaven, though sometimes he sees them by their reflection in a puddle, in the bottome of a well, or in a stinking ditch: So he knows that godly souls, though neever so poor, low, and contemptible, as to the things of this world, are fixt in Heaven, in the Region above; and therefore, their poverty, and meannesse, is no bar to hinder him from learning of them.

Vide *Bey* on the words.

Ephes. 2. 6.

Though *John* was poor in the world, yet many humble souls did not disdain, but rejoyce in his Ministry. Christ lived poor, and dyed poor, *Mat.* 8. 20. As he was born in another mans house, so he was buried in another mans tomb. *Austin* observes, when Christ dyed, he made no will, he had no Crown-lands, only his Coat was left, and that the Souldiers parted among them; and yet those that were meek and lowly in heart, counted it their Heaven, their happineſſe, to be taught and instructed by him.

The seventeenth Property of an humble soul is this, An humble soul will blesse God, and be thankful to God, as well under misery, as under mercy: As well when God frownes, as when he smiles, as well when God takes, as when he gives; as well under crosses and losses, as under blessings and mercies. *Job* 1. 21. The Lord gives and the Lord takes, blessed be the name of the Lord. He doth not cry out upon the *Sabeans*, and the *Chaldeans*, but he

Tully calls gratitude, *Mamiam*, imo materiam omnium virtutum reliquarum. The greatest, yea the mother of all virtues.

The Jewes have a Prov: That we must leap up to Mount Gerizim, which was a Mount of Blessings: But creep into Mount Ebal, which was a Mount of Curses. To shew that we must be ready to blesse, but backward to curse. An humble soul can extract, one contrary out of another; honey out of the rock, gold out of iron, &c. Afflictions to humble souls are the Lords Plow, the Lords Harrow, the Lords Flaile, the Lords drawing Plasters, the Lords pruning knife, the Lords Position, the Lords Soap, and, therefore they can sit down and blesse the Lord, and kisse the Rod.

he looks through all secondary causes; and sees the hand of God; and then he layes his hand upon his own heart, and sweetly sings it out, *The Lord gives, & the Lord takes, blessed be the name of the Lord.* An humble soul, in every condition, blesses God, as the Apottle commands, in the 1 *Thess.* 5. 18. *In every thing give thanks to God.* So 1 *Cor.* 4. *Being reviled, we blesse; being persecuted, we suffer.* The language of an humble soul is, *If it be thy will, faith an humble soul, I should be in darknesse, I will blesse thee; and if it be thy will I should be again in light, I will blesse thee; if thou wilt comfort me, I will blesse thee; and if thou wilt afflict me, I will blesse thee; if thou wilt make me poor, I will blesse thee; if thou wilt make me rich, I will blesse thee; if thou wilt give me the least mercy, I will blesse thee; if thou wilt give me no mercy, I will blesse thee.* An humble soul is quick-sighted, he sees the rod in a fathers hand; he sees honey upon the top of every twigg, and so can blesse God; he sees Sugar at the bottom of the bitterest cup that God doth put into his hand; he knows, that Gods house of correction is a School of instruction; and so he can sit down and blesse, when the rod is upon his back: An humble soul knows, that the design of God in all, is his instruction, his reformation, and his salvation.

It was a sweet saying of holy *Bradford*, If the Queen will give me my life, I will thank her; if she wil banish me, I will thank her; if she will burn me, I will thank her; if she will condemn me to perpetual imprisonment, I will thank her. I, this is the temper of an humble heart. An humble soul knows, that to blesse God in prosperity, is the way to increase it; and to blesse God in adversity, is the way to remove it. An humble soul knows, that if he blesses God under mercies, he hath paid his debt; but if he blesses God under crosses, he hath made God a debtor. But oh the pride of mens hearts, when the rod is upon their backs! You have many Professors that are seemingly humble, while the Sun shines, while God gives, and smiles, and strokes; but when his smiles are turned into frowns; when he strikes and layes on, Oh the murmurings! the disputings! the frettings! and wrang-

wranglings of proud souls, they always kick when God strikes.

The last Property of an humble soul, is this, An humble soul will wisely and patiently bear reproof, *Prov. 25. 12. As an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprov-er upon an obedient ear. A seasonable reproof falling upon an humble soul, hath a redoubled grace with it. It is an Ear-ring of gold, and as an Ornament of fine gold; or as a Dia-mond in a Diadem.*

An humble David can say, *Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness, and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent Oyle, which shall not break my head.* David compares the faith-ful reproof of the righteous, to the excellent Oyl that they used about their heads. Some translate it, *Let it never cease from my head.* That is, let me never want it; and so the Original will bear too; I would never want reproofs, whatsoever I want. *But yet my prayer shall be in their calamities.* I will re-quire their reproofs with my best prayers, in the day of their calamity, saith David. Whereas a proud heart will neither pray for such, nor with such as reprove them, but in their calamities will most insult over them.

Some translate it more emphatically. *The more they do, the more I shall think my self bound unto them.* And this was Gersomes disposition, of whom it is recorded, That he rejoy-iced in nothing more then if he were freely and friendly re-proved by any. *Prov. 9. 8, 9. Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee; give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser. Prov. 19. 25. Reprove one that hath understanding, and he will understand and knowledge.* You know how sweetly David car-ries it towards Abigail, *1 Sam. 25. 32, 33. she wisely meets him, and puts him in mind of what he was going about, and he falls a blessing of her presently, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me; and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood. I was resolved in my passion, and in the heat of my spirit, that I would not leave a man alive, but blessed be God, and blessed be thy Counsel.* An humble soul can sit down and bless God under reproofs. An

Psal. 141. 5. Oyle is here Metaphori-cally taken for words of reproof, which may be said (figura-tively) to break the head. Vide Job 10. 2.

25

In vit. 70. Gers. So Alipius loved Austin for reproving him. So did David, Na-than, 1 Kings 1. 2 Sam. 12. 12, 13. & 24. 13, 14. That's a choice and tender spirit, that can meekly and humbly em-brace re-proofs, and bless God for reproofs.

Manasse King of *Judah*, being reprov'd by the Aged Princely Prophet *Isaiah*, caus'd him near to the Fountain of *Silce*, to be sawn in funder with a wooden saw, in the eightieth year of his age. For which cruel fact, amongst other of his sins, he was sorely punished by God. 2 *Chr* 33. 11. So *Cambyses* King of *Persia* hated *Proastepes*, one of his Nobles that was familiar with him, for reprov'ing his drunkenness. * *Enemuckertion*. They blow'd their nose at him, manifesting thereby their scorning at what he said. *Exod* 12, 14.

humble soul is like the *Syrian* King that went naked in the snow; and when *Alexander* wonder'd how he could endure it; he answer'd; *I am not ashamed for I am all forehead*. An humble soul is all forehead, able to bear reproofs with much wisdom and patience. Oh! but a proud heart cannot bear reproofs, he scor'ns the Reptover, and his Reproofs too.

Prov 15. 12. *A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him, neither will he goe unto the wise*. *Amos* 5. 10. *They hate him that reproveth in the gate; as Ahab did good Micah, and Herod did John Baptist, and the Pharisees our Saviour*. *Luke* 16. 13. Christ being to deal with the covetous *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, he laves the Law home, and tells them plainly, that they could not serve God and *Mammon*. Here Christ strikes at their right eye; but how do they hear this? mark in the 14. verse. *The Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided him*. The *Pharisees* did not simply laugh at Christ, but gave also external signs of scorn, in their countenance and gestures. * They blew their nose at him, for that's the meaning of the Original word. By their gestures they demonstrat'd their horrid deriding of him; they feared and jeared, when they should have feared and trembled, at the wrath to come. *Isa* 28. 10. *For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little*. One observes, that that was a scoff put upon the Prophet; and is as if they should say, Here is nothing but precept upon precept, line upon line. And indeed the very sound of the words in the Original, carries a taunt (*Zau le zan, kan lakan*) as scornful people, by the tone of their voyce, and riming words, scorn at such as they despise. Pride, and passion, and other vices in these dayes go armed, touch them never so gently, yet, like the nettle, they will sting you; and if you deal with them roundly, roughly, cuttingly, as the Apostle speaks, they will swagger with you, as the Hebrew did with *Moses*, *Who made thee a Judge over us?*

And thus much for the Properties of an humble soul. I come now to the next thing, &c. that is, to shew you the Reasons,

Reasons, why the best men are the most humble men.

First, Because they see themselves the greatest debtors to God for what they doe enjoy.

There's no man on Earth that sees himself such a debtor to God as the humble man. Every smile makes him a debtor to God; and every good word from Heaven makes him a debtor to God; he looks upon all his temporals, as health, wealth, wife, child, friend, &c. & sees himself deeply indebted for all. He looks upon his spiritual mercies, and sees himself a great debtor to God for them; he looks upon his graces, and sees himself a debtor for them; he looks upon his Experiences, and sees himself a debtor for them; he looks upon all his Priviledges, and sees himself a debtor for them; he looks upon his incomes, and sees himself a debtor for them. The more mercy he hath received, the more he looks upon himself indebted and obliged to pay duty and tribute to God; as you may see in *Psal.* 116. 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14 Verses compared. In the 6, 7, 8 Verses he tells you of the mercies he had received from God, & in the 12 & 13 verses sayes he, *What shall I render to the Lord, for all his benefits towards me? I see my self* (saith he) *wonderfully indebted; well what then? why, I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord, in the presence of all his people.* The same you have in the 16, 17, and 18 Verses of the same Psalm.

So David, *Psal.* 103. 1, 2, 3, 4. casts his eyes upon his temporal, and his spiritual mercies, and then calls upon his soul, *O my soul blesse the Lord, and all that is within me; blesse his holy name. Blesse the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases, &c.* An humble soul knows, that 'tis a strange folly to be proud of being more in debt, then another. 'Tis true, saith he, I have this and that mercy in possession, and such and such mercies in reversion; but by all, I am the more a debtor to God.

Cæsar admired at that mad Souldier, who was very much in debt, & yet slept so quietly. So do's an humble soul wonder & admire, to see men that are so much indebted to God

When a Knight died at Rome, that was much in debt, Augustus the Emperor sent to buy his bed, conceiving there most needs be some extraordinary virtue in it, if he that was so much in debt, could take any rest upon it.

An humble soul sees himself so much in debt for mercies in hand, and mercies in hope, that he can't sleep without blessing and admiring of God.

I have read of a stork that cast a Pearl into the bosome of a Maid which had healed her of a wound: So humble souls cast the Pearl

of praise into
the bosom of
God for all
his favours
towards
them.

Guc. Hist. l. 4.

for mercies (as many are) and yet sleep so quietly, and be so mindlesse and carelesse in blessing and praising of God. There is nothing (saith one) that endures so small a time, as the memory of mercies received; and the more great they are, the more commonly they are recompenced with ingratitude.

Secondly, it is Because in this life they have but a tast of God.

In the 1 Per. 2. 2, 3. *As new born Babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* The best men on this side Heaven, have but a tast; he is but in a tatting, desiring, hungry, thirsting, and growing condition, Job 26. ult. *These are part of his wayes, but how a little a portion is heard of him?* So in 1 Cor. 13. 9, 10, 12. *We know but in part, and we prophesie but in part, now we see through a glasse darkly, but then face to face.* The Lord gives out but little of himself here, we have but a tast of Divine sweetnesse here; we see but the back parts of God; the day is not far off, when we shall see his face. The best of Christ is behind, as the sweetest Honey lies in the bottome. Our greatest knowledge here, is to know that we know nothing.

Elias cum venerit solvet omnia.

The Rabbins, in their Comments upon Scripture, when they meet with hard knots that they cannot explicate, they solve all with this, *When Elias comes, he will resolve all things.* The best men are in the dark, & will be in the dark, till the Lord comes to shine forth upon them in more grace and glory. The best men on this side Heaven, are narrow vessels they are able to receive and take in but little of God. The best men are so full of the world, and the vanities thereof, that they are able to take in but little of God. Here God gives his people some tastes that they may not faint; and he gives them but a tast, that they may long to be at home, that they may keep humble, that they may set loose from things below, that they may not break and despise bruised reeds, & that Heaven may be the more sweet to them at last, &c.

A third Reason why the best men are the most humble, & that is, Because the best men dwell more upon their worse part,

part, their ignoble part, then they do upon their noble part, their better part.

In *Isa. 6. 5.* I am a man of unclean lips, faith that humble soul. So humble *Job* cries out, of the iniquity of his youth; and sayes he, *Once have I spoken foolishly, yea twice, but I will do so no more.* Humble *David*, *Psal. 51. 3.* sighs it out, *My sin is ever before me.* So humble *Paul*, *Rom. 7. 22, 23.* complains, that he hath a law in his members, warring against the Law of his mind, and leading him captive to the Law of sin; and that when he would do good, evil was present with him. An humble soul sees that he can stay no more from sin, then the heart can from panting, and the pulse from beating; he sees his heart and life to be fuller of sin, then the firmament is of Stars; and this keeps him low. He sees that sin is so bred in the bone, that till his bones, as *Joseph*, be carried out of the *Egypt* of this world, it will not out: He every day finds that these *Jehusites* & *Canaanites* to be as thorns in his eyes, and as goads in his sides; he finds sin an ill inmate, that will not out, till the house fall on the head of it: As the fretting Leprosie, in the walls of the house, would not out till the house it self was demolisht. Though Sin and Grace were never born together, and though they shall not dye together; yet while the Believer lives, these two must live together; and this keeps them humble.

As the *Peacock* looking upon his black feet, lets fall his Plumes: So the poor soul, when he looks upon his black feet, the vanity of his mind, the body of sin that is in him, his proud Spirit falls low.

Epimionidas an Athenian Captain, being askt why he was so sad the day after a great Victory, answered, *Yesterday I was tickled with much vain glory, therefore I correct my selfe for it to day.* That's the temper of an humble soul. 'Tis very observable, that the Saints are pressed to take notice of their better part, *Cant. 1. 15.* Behold thou art fair my Love, behold thou art fair. And so, *Chap. 4. 1.* Behold thou art faire, behold thou art fair. God hath much ado to get a gracious heart to mind his spiritual beauty; to take notice of the inward excellency that he hath wrought in it. Though the Kings Daughter

Iob 13. 26.
Iob 40. 15.

Teneo in memoria, scribo in Charta, sed non habeo in vita.
Aug.

As Hagar would dwell with *Sarah*, till she beat her out of doors, so will sin dwell with Grace, till death beat it out of doors.

This duplication (as well as the *Ecce*) is full of satisfaction and admiration, and Christ by praising perfects his own work; for (*Locutio verbi infuso doni*) to call her fair, is to make her so, *Gal. 1.*

Daughter, be all glorious within, yet God hath much ado to bring her to see & take notice of her inward beauty & glory. The humble soul is more set to eye and dwell upon its deformity, then it is upon that beauty and glory that God hath stamp't upon it. And this makes the man little and low in his own eyes.

Fourthly, Because they have the clearest sight and vision of God, and have the nearest and highest communion with God. None on earth are so near to God, and so high in their communion with God, as humble souls. And as they have the clearest Visions of God, so those actions of God give them the fullest sight and knowledge of their own fustulnesse and nothingnesse. So in *Job 42. 4, 5. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye hath seen thee, I abhor my self in dust and ashes.* *Isa. 6. 1. 5.* In a Vision the Lord discovers his glory to the Prophet, then *vers. 5. Who is me* (saith he) *for I am undone* (or I am cut off) *why? because I am a man of unclean lips; and have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.* Oh the Vision that I have had of the glory of God hath given me such a clear and full sight of my own vile-nesse and basenesse, that I can't but loath and abhor my self. When *Abraham* draws neer to God, then he accounts himself but dust and ashes, *Gen. 18. 26, 27.* The Angels that are neer God, that stand before him, they cover their faces with two wings, as with a double Scarf in the 6 of *Isa. ver. 2.*

The fifth and last Reason why those are most humble that are most holy, is Because they maintain in themselves a holy fear of sinning.

And the more this holy fear of falling is maintained, the more the soul is humbled. *Prov. 14. 16. A wise man feareth, and departeth from evill.* And *Chap. 23. 14. Happy is the man that feareth alwayes; but he that hardeneth his heart, shall fall into mischief.* And this keeps the holy soul humble.

I have known a good old man, saith *Bernard*, who when he had heard of any that had committed some notorious offence, was wont to say with himself, *He fell to day, so may I to morrow.* Now the Reason why humble souls do keep up

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UNION
from
AND !
which signi-
fies to reject,
to despise, to
cast off, to
contemne.

As one fire,
so one fear
drives out
another.
As the Sun-
shine puts out
fire, so doth
the fear of
God, the fire
of lusts.

He bodis, &
agitor.

in themselves a holy fear of falling, is, Because this is the best to keep them from falling. *Job* fears, and conquers on the dunghill; *Adam* presumes, and falls in paradise. *Nehemiah* fears, and stands, *Nehem. 5. 15*. *Peter* presumes, and falls, *Mat. 26*. Mr. *Sanders* (the Martyr) in Queen *Mary's* dayes, fears, and stands: Dr. *Pendleton* presumes, and falls, from a Professor, to be a Papist.

When *Agamemnon* said, What should the Conquerour fear? *Cassander* presently answered, (*Quod nihil timet*) He should fear this most of all, that he fears not at all.

And so I have done with the Reasons of the Point. I shall now come to the Uses of it. And the first is this.

Is it so, That the most holy souls are the most humble souls? Then this shews you, That the number of holy souls is very few. Oh how few be there that are low in their own eyes? The number of souls that are high in the esteem of God, and low in their own esteem, are very few. Oh the pride of *England*! Oh the pride of *London*! Pride in these days ha's got a whores forehead; yet Pride cannot climb so high but Justice will sit above her.

Bernard saith, That Pride is the rich mans Cousen. I may add, And the poor mans Cousen, and the prophane mans Cousen, and the civil mans Cousen, and the formal mans Cousen, and the Hypocrites Cousen; yea, all mens Cousen; and it will first or last cast down, and cast out all the *Lucifers* and *Adams* in the world.

Secondly, As you would approve your selves to be high in the account of God, as you would approve your selves to be not only good, but eminently good, Keep humble. Since *England* was *England*, since the Gospel shined amongst us, there was never such reason to presse this duty of humility, as in these dayes of pride wherein we live; and therefore I shall endeavour these two things.

First, To lay down some *Motives* that may work you to be humble.

Secondly, To propound some *Directions* that may further you in this work.

A proud heart relin-
ed, and is resist-
ed, this is
Duro durum,
flint to flint,
fire to fire,
yet down he
must.

First,

First, for the Motives: Consider,

First, how God singles out humble souls from all others, to pour out most of the Oyle of grace into their hearts.

No Vessels that God delights to fill, like broken vessels, like contrite spirits. *James 4. 6. He resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble.* The Greek word signifies, To set himself in battel array. God takes the wind and hill of a proud soul, but he gives grace to the humble. The silver dewes flow down from the Mountains to the lowest Valleys. *Abraham* was but dust and ashes in his own eyes, *I* but saith God, *Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I will do?* No, I will not. An humble soul shall be both of Gods Court, and his Counsel too. Humble *Jacob*, that was in his own eyes lesse then the least of all mercies; what a glorious Vision had he of God, when the Ground was his Bed, and the Stone his Pillow, and the Hedges his Curtains, and the Heavens his Canopy: then he saw Angels ascend and descend. An humble soul that lyes low, O what sights of God hath he! what glory doth he behold, when the proud soul sees nothing. God pours in grace to the humble, as men pour in liquor into an empty vessel. He does not drop in grace into an humble heart, but he pours it in.

The Altar under the Law was hollow, to receive the fire, the wood, and the sacrifice: So the hearts of men under the Gospel, must be humble, empty of all spiritual pride, and self-conceitednesse, hat so they may receive the fire of the Spirit, and *Jesus Christ*, who offered himself for a Sacrifice for our sins.

Humility is both a Grace, and a vessel to receive Grace. There's none that sees so much need of grace, as humble souls; there's none prizes grace like humble souls; there's none improves grace like humble souls: Therefore God singles out the humble soul to fill him to the brim with grace, when the proud is sent empty away.

A second Motive is, Of all Garments humility doth best become Christians, and most adorn their profession.

Faith is the Champion of grace, and Love, the Nurse, but Humility the beauty of grace. *1 Per. 5. 5. Be clothed*

with

Antitafferai.

Gen. 18. 17.

Gen. 32. 10.

Gen. 28.

He that is in the low pits and caves of the earth, sees the Stars in the Firmament, when they who are upon the tops of the mountains discern them not.

with humility. The Greek word imports, That Humility is the Ribbon or string that tyes together all those precious Pearls, the rest of the Graces: If this string break, they are all scattered.

The Greek word that is rendred *Cloathed*, comes of another Greek word that signifies to *knit*, and *tye knots*, as delicate and curious women use to doe, of Ribbons, to adorn their heads and bodies; as if Humility were the knot of every vertue, the grace of every grace. *Chrysostome* calls Humility, *The Root, Mother, Nurse, Foundation, and Band of all Vertue*. *Basil* calls it, *The Store house and Treasury of all good*: For what's the scandal and reproach of Religion at this day? nothing more then the Pride of Professors, Is not this the language of most? They are great Professors, O but very proud; they are great hearers, they will run from Sermon to Sermon, and cry up this man, and cry up that man, O but proud. They are great talkers, O but as proud as the Devil, &c. Oh that you would take the counsel of the Apostle! *Be clothed with humility*: And that *Col. 3. 12. Put on therefore as the Elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering*. No Robesto these.

The Third Motive is this, *Humility is a Loadstone that draws both the heart of God and man to it*.

In *Isa. 57. Thus saith the high and lofty one, that inhabiteth Eternity, whose name is holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit*. The Lord singles out the humble soul, of all others, to make him an Habitation for himself; Here is a wonder, God is on high, and yet the higher a man lifts up himself, the farther he is from God; And the lower a man humbles himself, the neerer he is to God. Of all souls, God delights most to dwell with the humble, for they do most prize and best improve his precious presence.

In *Prov. 29. 23. A mans pride shall bring him low, but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit*. *Prov. 22. 4. By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches and honour, &c.* The Hebrew is, *The bee of humility*. Riches and honour follow humility at the very heels. One of the Ancients used to say

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that

ὡς μέλισσα
α.

καὶ ὡς.

'Tis reported of the Christall, that it hath such a virtue in it, that the very touching of it quickens o-ther stones, and puts a lustre & beauty upon them. So does humility put a lustre upon every grace.

*Vn magnus ef-
se, incipe abi-
mo. Wilt thou
be great, be-
gin from be-
low, saith the
Father.*

** Totam ipsius
occupationem
esse inelevatio-
ne, humilium
& superborum
dejectione.*

*Dionysius a
proud King
of Sicily, fell
from a King
to a School-
master.
History is full
of such in-
stances.*

that Humility is the first, second, and third grace of a Christian. Humility is a very drawing grace, it draws men to think well and speak well of Christ, the Gospel, and the people of God; it makes the very world to say, I, these are Christians indeed; they are full of light, and yet full of lowliness; they are high in worth, and yet humble in heart: Oh these are the Crown and the glory of Religion.

An humble soul is like the Violet; that by its fragrant smell draws the eye and the hearts of others to him. *Mat. 18. 4. They are the greatest in the Kingdome of Heaven:* He that is least in his own account, is always greatest in Gods, and in good mens account.

The fourth Motive is this, consider, All the world cannot keep him up, that doth not keep down his own spirit.

One ask't a Philosopher, what God was a doing; he answered, * That his whole work was to lift up the humble, and to cast down the proud. That man cannot possibly be kept up, whose spirit is not kept down; as you may clearly see in *Pharaoh, Haman, Herod, and Nebuchadnezzar*; all the world could not keep them up, because their spirit was not kept down.

Prov. 29. 27. A mans pride shall bring him low; for 'it sets God against him, and Angels against him, and men against him; yea, even those that are as proud as himself.' 'Tis very observable, that whereas one Drunkard loves another, one Swearer loves another, and one Thief loves another, and one Unclean person loves another, &c. yet one proud person can't indure another, but seeks to undermine him; that he alone may bear the Bell; and carry the commendations, the praise, the promotion. It is storied of the *Romans*, that were the proudest people on the Earth, That they reckoned it as a parcel of their praise, that they brought down the proud. All the world, Sirs, will not keep up those persons that do not keep down their spirits.

Proud *Valerian*, the Roman Emperour, fell from being an Emperour, to be a foot-stool to *Sapor*, King of *Persia*, as oft as he took Horse.

Henry the Fourth, Emperour, in sixty-two Battels had generally

nerally the better, and yet was deposed, and driven to that misery, that he desired only a Clarkship in a house at *Spira*, that himself had built. And oh that professors would think of this in these dayes in which we live! All the world shall not keep up those which do not keep down their own spirits. The very design of God is to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt the honourable of the Earth; therefore now if men in our days shall grow proud and high, under mercies and Divine appearances, Justice will be above them, and turn their glory into shame, and lay their honour in the dust. If your blood rises with your outward good, you will certainly fall, and great will be your fall.

Isa. 4. 23.

The fifth consideration to provoke us to be humble, is this, Let us have alwayes our eye fixed upon the example of Jesus Christ, and his humble and lowly carriage.

Christ by his own example labours to provoke his Disciples to keep humble, and to walk lowly, in *John* 13. 4, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15 *Verses* compared: He rises & washes his Disciples feet, &c. & mark what he aims at in that carriage of his, *ver.* 12, 13, 14. *Know ye what I have done unto you* (saith he) *Ye call me Master, and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am; if I then your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one anothers feet; for I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.* I have given you an example, saith Christ, and I would have you to imitate my example. Example is the most powerful Rhetorick; the highest and noblest example should be very quickning and provoking. Oh here you have the greatest, the noblest example of humility, that was ever read or heard of. Upon consideration of this great & eminent example of Christs humility, *Guericus*, a good man, cryed out, *Thou hast overcome me, O Lord, thou hast overcome my pride, this example of thine hath mastered me.* O that we could say with this good man, *Thou hast overcome, O Lord, thou hast overcome our proud hearts, by this example thou hast overmastered our lofty spirits.*

This example of Christs humility, you have further set forth, *Phil.* 2. 6, 7, 8. *Who being in the form of God* (that is, in

Verf. 7.

the Nature and Essence of God, being very God, clothed with Divine glory and Majesty, as God) *thought it no robbery* (it being his right by Nature) *to be equall with God.* The Greek words that are rendred, *He thought it no robbery*, doe import, He made it not a matter of triumph or ostentation, to be equal with God, it being his right by nature; and therefore the challenging of it, could be no usurpation of anothers right, of taking to himself that which was not his own. *He thought it no robbery to be equall with God.* The Greek is *Equally*, that is, every way equal: Not a secondary and inferiour God, as the *Arcians* would have him. *But made himself of no reputation.* The Greek is, *Emptied himself*, that is, he suspended and laid aside his glory and Majesty, or dis-robed himself of his glory and dignity, and became a sinner, both by *Imputation*, and by *Reputation*, for our sakes.

And *Verf. 8. He humbled himself.* This Son of righteousness went ten degrees back in the Dial of his Father, that he might come to us with healing under his wings. *And became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.* In these words there is a kind of gradation; for it is more to become obedient, then to *humble himself*; and more to *yield unto death*, then to become obedient; and yet more to be crucified, then *simply to dye*; for it was to submit himself to a most painful, ignominious, and cursed death. *He became obedient, That is,* saith *Peza*, *to his dying day*; his whole life being nothing but a continual death.

I have read of an Earl called *Eleazarus*, that being given to immoderate anger, was cured of that disordered affection, by studying of Christ and his patience; he still dwelt upon the meditation of Christ and his patience, till he found his heart transformed into the similitude of Jesus Christ. And oh that you would never leave pondering upon that glorious example of Christs humility, till your hearts be made humble, like the heart of Christ! Oh that sweet word of Christ, *Mat. 11. 29.* might stick upon all your hearts! *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly, and you shall find rest to your souls.*

Benjamin Engraved this sweet saying of our Lord,
Learn

Lesson of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, in his Study: And oh that this saying was Engraven upon all your foreheads, upon all your hearts! Oh that it was Engraven upon the dishes you eat in, the cups you drink in, the seats you sit on, the Beds you lye on, &c.

Jerome having read the religious life and death of *Hilarion*, folding up the Book; said, Well, *Hilarion* shall be the Champion whom I will imitate. Oh when you look upon this glorious example of Christ, say, The Lord Jesus his example shall be that that my soul shall imitate.

Sixthly, Consider, Humility will free a man from perturbations and distempers.

When there are never such great storms without, humility will cause a calm within. There are a great many storms abroad, and there's nothing will put the soul into a quiet condition, but humility. An humble soul saith, who am I, that I may not be despised? Who am I, that I may not be reproached, abused, slighted, neglected? That which will break a proud mans heart, will not so much as break an humble mans sleep. In the midst of a storm, an humble soul is still in a calm: When proud hearts are at their wits ends, stamping, swearing, and swaggering at God, and man, and providence, an humble soul is quiet and still, like a ship in a Harbour; 2 Sam. 16. 6. 13. *Shimei* comes rayling and cursing of *David*, and calls him a bloody man, and a man of *Belial*, that is, a *Runnagado*, one who being desperately wicked had shaken off the yoke of Government, and would be under no Law: So the Hebrew word (*Jagnal*) signifies, men without yoke, or lawless. Therefore the Septuagint commonly Translate it (*Paranomos*) altogether irregular. It signifies most flagitious men, and notorious and desperately wicked, stigmatized Villains, even incarnate Devils; and yet *David* holds his peace, though provoked by his mighty men to revenge himself. Oh! how would this cursing and railing have maddened and broken many a proud mans heart, and yet it stirs not *David*.

Fulgentius after he was extremely persecuted, he had an advantage to seek revenge, but he would not, for saith he,

It was a good Law that the *Ephesians* ma. c. That men should propound to themselves the best patterns, and ever bear in mind some eminent man.

Plura pro Christo toleranda.

We

We must suffer more for Christ then so. What though I am thus and thus wronged? What though I have an opportunity for revenge? yet I must suffer more then so for Christ, sayes the humble soul. An humble soul, when wrongs are offered him, is like a man with a sword in one hand, and salve in another; he could kill, but will cure.

One wondring at the patience and humble carriage of *Socrates*, towards one that reviled him; *Socrates* said, If we should meet one whose body were more unsound then ours; should we be angry with him, & not rather pity him? Why then should we not do the like to him, whose soul is more diseased then ours? An humble soul, when he meets with this and that wrong from men, he knows that their souls are diseased, and that rather moves him to pity, then to revenge wrongs offered. A proud heart swels and grows big, when in the least wronged, and is ready to call for fire from Heaven, and to take any opportunity for revenge of wrongs offered. No man so abused as I, no man thus stilled as I, says the proud soul. O but an humble soul in patience possesse himself, in all trials and storms.

Galesius observes upon *Exod: 22. 28.* the patience and humble carriage of those three Emperours, *Theodosius*, *Honorius*, and *Arcadius*, towards those that spake evil of them; they would have them subject to no punishment; for they said, If it come from lightness of spirit, it is to be contemned; if from madness, tis worthy of pity; if from injury, it is to be forgiven; for injuries and wrongs are to be pardoned. And this is the true temper of an humble soul, and by this he enjoys peace and quiet, in the midst of all earthquakes and heart-quakes.

The seventh consideration is this, consider, Humility exaltech.

He that is most humble, is and shall be most exalted, and most honoured, No way to be high, like this of being low. *Moses* was the meekest man on Earth, and God made him the honourablest, calling of him up unto himself into the Mount, making known his glory to him, & making of him the Leader of his people *Israel*. *Gideon* was very little in his

own

own eyes, he was the leatt or his Fathers house in his own apprehension, and God exalts him, making him the Deliverer of his *Israel*.

It was a good saying of one, Wilt thou be great? begin from below. As the Roots of the Tree descend, so the Branches ascend. The lower any man is in this fence, the higher shall that man be raised. *Mat. 23. 12. And whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted.* God that's wisdom it self, hath said it, and he will make it good, though thou see't no wayes how it should be made good. The lowest valleys have the blessing of fruitfulness, while the high Mountains are barren. *Prov. 18. 12. Before destruction the heart of man is lofty, and before honour is humility.*

David came not to the Kingdom till he could truly say, *Lord my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lifted up, Psa: 131. 1, 2. Abigail* was not made Davids wife, till she thought it honour enough to wash the feet of the meanest of Davids servants, *1 Sam. 25. Moses* must be forty years a stranger in *Midian*, before he become King in *Jeshurun*; he must be struck sick to death in the Inn, before he goes to *Pharaoh* on that Noble Embassage.

It was a sweet Observation of *Luther*, That for the most part when God set him upon any special service for the good of the Church, he was brought low by some fit of sicknesse, or other. Surely as the lower the ebb, the higher the tide; so the lower any descend in Humility, the higher they shall ascend in honour and glory. The lower this foundation of Humility is laid, the higher shall the roof of honour be overlaid. If you would turn spiritual purchasers of honor, or of whatsoever else is good, no way like this of humility. We live in times wherein men labour to purchase honour; some by their mony; others by their friends; others by making themselves slaves to the lusts of men; others by being prodigal of their blood, and many by giving themselves up to all manner of baseness and wickedness, whereby their carnal ends may be attain'd, and themselves exalted; but these men & their honour will quickly be laid in the dust. Oh! but the ready st,
the

*Qui parvus est
in reputatione
propria, magnus
est in reparatione
divina.*
Gregory.

the surest, the safest, the sweetest way to attain to true honour, is to be humble, to lye low. Humility makes a man precious in the eye of God. *He that is little in his own account, is great in Gods esteem.*

The eighth and last consideration that I shall propound, is this, *Consider humility keeps the soul free from many darts of Satans casting, and snares of his spreading.*

As you may see in the Three Children, in Daniel, and in those Worthies in the 11 of the Hebrews, of whom this world was not worthy. As the lowest shrubs are freed from many violent gusts and blasts of wind, which shake and rend the tallest Cedars; so the humble soul is free from a world of temptations, that proud and lofty souls are shaken and torn in pieces with. The Devil hath least power to fasten a temptation upon an humble soul. He that hath a gracious measure of humility, is neither affected with Satans proffers, nor terrified with Satans threatnings. The golden Chain does not allure him, nor the iron Chain does not daunt him.

Quis pertran-
siet ista? The
answer was,
Humilitas per-
transiet.
Ego non sum
ego.

I have read of one, who seeing in a Vision many suares of Satan spread upon the Earth, he sat down and mourned, and said with himself, *Who shall passe through these?* whereunto he heard a voice answering, *Humility shall passe through them.* A proud heart is as easily conquered, as tempted; vanquished, as assaulted: But the humble soul, when tempted, sayes with that worthy Convert, *I am not the man that I was.* There was a time when my heart was proud, and lifted up, and then thou couldst no sooner knock, but I opened; no sooner call, but I answered; no sooner tempt, but I did assent. Oh! but now the Lord taught me to be humble; I can resist, though I can't dispute; I can fight, but not yield.

Mistress Katherine Bretterge (an humble precious soul) being once in a great conflict with Satan, said thus to him, *Satan, reason not with me, I am but a weak woman; if thou hast any thing to say, say it to my Christ; he is my Advocate, my strength, and my Redeemer, and he shall plead for me.* An humble soul is good at turning Satan over to the Lord Jesus, and

and this increases Satans Hell. It is reported of Satan, that he should say thus of a Learned man, Thou dost alwayes overcome me; when I would throw thee down, thou liest up thy self in assurance of Faith; and when I would exalt and promote thee, thou keepst thy self in humility; and so thou art too hard for me. The only way to avoid Cannon-shot (as they say) is to fall down flat; No such way to be freed from temptations as to keep low.

And so I have done with the first Head; namely, The Motives that should move and provoke us, to keep humble, to be base, to be nothing in our own eyes.

I shall now come to some Helps, and Directions, that may be useful to keep us humble and low in our own eyes: And the first is this,

Dwell much upon the greatnesse of Gods mercy and goodnesse to you.

Nothing humbles & breaks the heart of a sinner like mercy, and love. Souls that converse much with sin and wrath, may be much terrified; but souls that converse much with grace and mercy, will be much humbled. *Luke 7.* the Lord Jesus shews mercy to that notorious sinner, and then she falls down at his feet, and loves much, and weeps much, &c. In the *1 Chron. 17.* it was in the heart of David to build God a house: God would not have him to do it, yet the Messenger must tell David, that God would build him a house, and establish his Son upon the Throne for ever. Look into *15. 16. 17 verses*, and there you shall find that David lets fall such an humble speech, which he never did before that God had sent him that message of advancement. And David the King came, and sat before the Lord, and said, *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is mine house that thou hast brought me hither to? And yet this was a small thing in thine eyes O God; for thou hast also spoken of thy servants houses for a great while to come,* &c. And this sweetly and kindly melts him; and humbles him, before the Lord. Oh if ever you would have your souls kept low, dwell upon the free grace and love of God to you in Christ. Dwell upon the firstnesse of his love, dwell upon the freenesse of his love, the greatnesse of

Tu me semper vincis.

'Tis said of Adam that he turned his face to the Garden of Eden and wept fore.

Verf. 10. 11.

2 Sam. 9. 7. 8.

As honey flows naturally from the Bee, so does mercy flow naturally from God.

his love, the fullness of his love, the unchangeableness of his love, the everlastingness of his love, and the activity of his love; if this do not humble thee, there is nothing on earth will do it. Dwell upon what God hath undertaken for you. Dwell upon the choice and worthy gifts that he has bestowed on you; And dwell upon that glory and happiness that he has prepared for you, and then be proud if you can.

Secondly, Keep faith in continual exercise, upon Christ as crucified, and upon Christ as glorified.

There are two special sights of Christ, that tend much to humble and abase a soul.

The one is a sight of Christ in his misery, in the 12 of *Zeeph. ver. 12.*

And the other is a sight of Christ in his glory, *Rev. 1. 7. Isa. 6. 1, 3, 5.* compared. 'Tis dangerous to be more notion, then motion; to have faith in the head, and none in the heart; to have an idle, & not an active faith. 'Tis not enough for you to have faith, but you must look to the acting of your faith, upon Christ as crucified, and upon Christ as glorified. Souls much in this, will be very little and low in their own eyes. The great reason why the soul is no more humble, is, because faith is no more active.

Thirdly, Study your own natures more, and what ever evil you behold in other mens practises, labour to see the same in your own nature.

- There is the seed of all sins, of the vilest and worst of sins, in the best of men. When thou seest another drunk, thou mayst see the seed of that sin in thy own nature. When thou seest another unclean, the seeds of uncleanness thou mayest see in thy own nature. And in that thou dost not as a uncleanneffe as others, it arises not from the goodness of thy nature, but from the riches of Gods grace. Remember this, there is not a worse nature in Hell, then that that is in thee; and it would discover it self accordingly, if the Lord did not restrain it, it would carry thee to those horrid acts that are against the very light of nature.

There was one that was a long time tempted to three horrid sins; to be drunk, to dye with his mother, and to murder.

As one scale goes up, the other goes down: So as faith goes up, the heart goes down.

Inibria fued Scenols, for that he received not his weapon deep enough into his body, Aug.

I have read of an Italian Monster, who taking his E-n

der

der his father. Being a long time followed with these horrid temptations, at last he thought to get rid of them, by yielding to that he judged the least, & that was to be drunk: But when he was drunk, he did both lye with his mother, and murder his father. Why such a Hellish nature is in every soul that breaths; and did God leave men to act according to their natures, men would be all incarnate Devils, & this world a perfect Hell. Such is the corruption of our nature, that propound any Divine good to it, it is entertain'd as fire by water. But propound any evil, and it's like fire to straw; 'tis like the foolish *Savv* that made haste to kiss the fire; 'tis like that unctious matter, which the Naturalists say, that it sucks and snatches the fire to it, with which it is consumed. There was a holy man that rarely heard of other mens crimson sins, but he usually bedew'd the place with his tears, considering that the seeds of those very sins was in his own nature. In thy nature thou hast that that would lead thee with the Pharisees to oppose Christ; and with *Judas* to betray Christ; and with *Pilate*, to condemn Christ; and with the Souldiers to crucifie Christ, &c. Oh what a monster, what a Devil wouldst thou prove, should God but leave thee to act sutable to that sinful and woful nature of thine?

Fourthly, Dwell much upon the imperfection that follows, and cleaves to thy best actions.

Oh the wandrings! Oh the deadnesse! the dullnesse! the fruitlesse of thy spirit in Religious duties! Man is a creature apt to hugge himself in Religious services; and to pride himself in holy duties; and to stroak himself after duties, and to warm himself by the sparks of his own fire (his own performances) though he does lye down in sorrow for it, *Isa. 50. ult.* When ever thou comest off from holy services, sit down, and look over the spots, blots and blemishes that cleave to your choicest services. The fairest day ha's its clouds; the richest Jewels, their flaws; the finest faces, their spots; the fairest Copies, their blots; and so have our finest and fairest duties.

Plutarch tells of a private Souldier of *Julius Caesar*, who fought so valiantly in *Brittain*, that by his means he sav'd

nemy upon an advantage, set his dagger to his heart, & made him to abjure and blaspheme the Lord, that so he might save his life: which being done, he thrust him through, and with a bloody triumph, insulting over him, said, Oh this is right noble and heroicall revenge, which doth not only deprive the body of temporal life, but bringeth also the immortal soul to endless flames everlastingly. See what natures you carry with you.

It was a good saying of one of the fathers, Other vices are in sins (saith he) but pride and high confidence is most apt to creep in upon duties well done.

Pharoch in
the life of Cae-
sar.

the Captains, which otherwise were in great danger to be cast away (being driven into a Bog) then marching with great pain through the mire and dirt; in the end he got to the other side, but left his shield behind him. *Cæsar* wondering at his noble courage, ran to him with joy, to embrace him: But the poor Souldier hanging down his head, the water standing in his eyes, fell down at *Cæsars* feet, and besought him to pardon him, for that he had left his Shield behind him. You know how to apply it. He had done gallantly, yet he falls down at *Cæsars* feet, after his brave service, with tears in his eyes, upon the sense of his leaving his shield behind him; when we have done our best, we have cause to fall down at *Jesus* feet, and with tears in our eyes, sue our pardon.

Fifthly, In the day of thy prosperity, forget not thy former poverty.

Gen. 32. 10.

Psal. 78. 71.

1 Chron. 17.

In the day of thy present greatness, forget not thy former meanness. *Jacob*, in the day of his prosperity remembers his former poverty; *With my staffe I passed over Jordan, & now I am become two bands.* And so *David*, in his prosperity remembered that his sheep-hook was changed into a Scepter, and his seat of turf into a Royal Throne. And when *Joseph* was a Royal favourite, he remembered that he had been an imprisoned slave. And when *Gideon* was raised to be a Saviour to *Israel*, he remembered how God took him from the Threshing-floor (*Judges* 6. 11.) and how God changed his threshing instrument of wood, into one of iron to thresh the Mountains, as God himself phraseth it, *Isa.* 41.

15.

Primislaus, the first King of *Bohemia*, kept his Country shooes alwayes by him, to remember from whence he was raised.

Agarhocles, by the furniture of his Table, confest that from a Potter he was raised to be a King of *Sicily*.

We live in times wherein many a man hath been raised from the dunghil, to sit with Princes. And that such were wise to remember their former low & contemptible beings; & to walk humbly before the Lord: Otherwise who can tel but that greater contempt shal be poured forth upon them,

then

then that which they have poured upon Princes.

Sixthly, Look upon all that you have received, and all that you shall hereafter receive, as the fruit of free Grace.

Look upon thy Adoption, and write this Motto, This is the fruit of free Grace. Look upon thy Justification, and write this Motto, This is the fruit of free Grace. Look upon all thy Graces, and write, These are the fruits of free Grace. Look upon thy Experiences and write, These are the fruits of free Grace. Look upon thy strength to withstand Temptations, and write, This is the fruit of free Grace. Look upon Divine power to conquer corruptions, and write, This is the fruit of free Grace. Look upon the Bread thou eatest, the Beer thou drinkest, the cloaths thou wearest, &c. and write, These are the fruits of free Grace. 1 Cor. 4. 7. *Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as though thou hadst not received it? Who maketh thee to differ? Episcopus, a great insolent Arminian, answered, I make my self to differ, to wit, by the improvement of Nature.*

Ego me ipsum discerno.

This age is full of such proud Monsters: But an humble soul sees free grace to be the Spring and Fountain of all his mercies and comforts; he writes free Grace upon all his temporals, and upon all his spirituals, &c.

The Seventh Direction is, Meditate much upon these two things.

First, The great mischief that sin hath done in the World.

It cast Angels out of Heaven; and Adam out of Paradise; it hath lain the first corner-stone in Hell, and ushered in all the evils and miseries that be in the world. It hath threw down Abraham, the Best Believer in the world; and Noah, the most Righteous man in the world; and Job, the Uprightest man in the world; and Moses, the meekest man in the world; and Paul, the greatest Apostle in the world. Oh the diseases, the crosses, the losses, the miseries, the deaths, the hells, that sin hath brought upon the world!

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Basil wept when he saw the Rose, because it brought to his

his mind the first sin from whence it had the prickles, which it had not while man continued in Innocency, as he thought: Oh when he saw the prickles his soul wept: So when we see, hear, or read, of the blood, misery, wars, and ruins that sin ha's brought upon us, let us weep, and lye humble before the Lord.

Mat. 23. 15.

Secondly, Meditate much on this, That many wicked men take more pains to damn their souls and go to Hell, then thou dost to save thy soul and to get to Heaven.

Such a mad
Devil was Ca-
talin.

Oh what pains do wicked men take, to damn their souls, and go to hell! *Lactantius* saith of *Lucian*, that he spared neither God, nor man. He took pains to make himself twice told a child of wrath.

Iſa. 5. 11.

It is said of *Marcellus*, the Roman Generall, That he could not be quiet (*Nec victor, nec victus*) neither Conquered, nor Conquerour. Such wrestleless wretches are wicked men. The Drunkard rises up in the morning, and continues till midnight, till wine inflame him. The unclean person waits his time, and strength, and estate, and all to ruine his own soul.

Theatinus being told by his Physician, that if he did not leave his lewd courses, he would loose his sight; answered, (*Vale lumen amicum*) Then farewell sweet light. What a deal of pains does the worldling take? He rises up early, and goes to Bed late, and leaves no stone unturn'd, and all to make himself but the more miserable in the close.

Socrus Eccl.
Hist. l. 4.
c. 28.

Pambus, in the Ecclesiastical History, wept when he saw a Harlot drest with much care and cost; partly to see one take so much pains to go to Hell; & partly because he had not been so careful to please God, as he had been to please a wanton lover: Oh Sirs! what reason have you to spend your dayes in weeping? when you look abroad see what pains most men take to damn their souls, and go to Hell; and then consider what little pains you take to escape Hell, to save your souls, and go to Heaven.

Eightly, Get more internal and experimental knowledge and acquaintance with God.

If ever you would keep humble, no knowledge humbles and

and abases, like that which is inward & experimental. We live in dayes wherein there is abundance of notional light; many Professors know much of God notionally, but know nothing of God experimentally: They know God in the History, but know nothing of God in the Mystery. They know much of God in the letter, but little or nothing of God in the spirit; & therefore 'tis that they are so proud & high in their own conceits, when as he that experimentally knows the Lord, is a Worm, & no man in his own eyes. As the Sun is necessary to the world, the eye to the body, the Pilate to the Ship, the General to the Army: So is experimental knowledge to the humbling of a soul. Who more experimental in their knowledge, then *David, Job, Isaiah, and Paul*? And who are more humble then these Worthies?

Seneca observed of the Philosophers, That when they grew more learned, they were lesse moral: So a growth in notions will bring a great decay in humility and zeal, as it's too evident in these dayes. Well, remember this, a drop of experimental knowledge will more humble a man, then a sea of notional knowledge.

Ninthly, Look up to a crucified Christ for special power and strength, against the pride of your hearts. 'Tis sad in these knowing times to think how few there are that know the right way of bringing under the power of any sin. Most men scarce look so high as a crucified Christ, for power against their powerful sins. One soul sits down and complains, such a lust haunts me, I'll pray it down. Another saith, such a sin follows me, and I'll hear it down, or watch it down, or resolve it down; and so a crucified Christ is not in all their thoughts. Not but that you are to hear, pray, watch, and resolve against your sins; but above all, you should look to the string of Faith upon a crucified Christ. As he said of the sword of *Goliath*, None like to that. So I say, none like to this, for the bringing under the pride of our hearts. The weaker the house of *Saul* grew, the stronger the house of *David* grew. The weakning of your pride, will be the increase and strengthening of your Humility; and therefore what the King of *Syria* said unto his fifty Captains,

Fight

'Tis a sad thing to be often eating of the Tree of Knowledge, but never to tast of the Tree of Life.

To know A
two
Psal. 104. 4.
It was the
blood of the
Sacrifice, and
the Oyle that
cleaned the
Leper in the
the Law, and
that by them
was meant
the blood of
Christ, and
the grace of
his Spirit, is
agreed by all.

Eight neither with small, nor great, but with the King of Israel. So say I, if you would keep humble, if you will lye low, draw forth your Artillery, place your greatest strength against the pride of your souls, (The death of pride, will be the resurrection of humility.) And that this may tick upon you, I shall lay down several propositions concerning pride; and I am so much the more willing to fall upon this work, and to make it the subject of our discourse at this time, because this horrid sin doth appear so boldly, and impudently; and that not only among prophane persons, but Professors also. There are ten Propositions that I shall lay down concerning Pride.

And the first is this,

Of all finnes, Pride is most dangerous to the souls of Men.

Pride is a sin that will put the soul upon the worst of sins. Pride is a gilded misery, a secret poyson, a hidden plague. 'Tis the Ingeneer of deceit, the Mother of hypocrisie, the Parent of envy, the Moth of holiness, the blinder of hearts, the turner of Medicines into Maladies, and Remedies into Diseases. 'Tis the Original and root of most of those notorious Vices that be to be found among the children of men. It was pride that put *Herod* upon seeking the blood of Christ. 'Twas pride that put the *Pharisees* upon the persecuting of Christ. 'Twas pride that made *Athaliah* destroy all the seed Royall of the house of *Judah*, that he might reign, *2 Chron. 23. 10.* 'Twas pride that put *Joub* upon murdering perfidiously, under colour of friendship, *Abner, 2 Sam. 3. 27, & Amasa. 2 Sam. 10. 9. 10. Zimri* out of Ambition to Reign, murdered *Eliab* his Lord, *1 Kings 16. 8, 9, 10. Omri* out of Pride and Ambition to Reign, rose up against *Zimri*, and enforced him to burn himselfe in the Kings Palace, *1 Kings 16. 18.* 'Tis Pride that hath furthered in all the contentions that be in Towns, Cities, Countries, Families, and Pulpits throughout the world. It was Pride, and Ambition to Reign, that put *Abalom* upon pursuing his Fathers life, from whom he had received life.

It is very remarkable, that the Pride and Ambition of

A World of instances out of Histories might be given if it were needful, further to evidence this truth.

Nebuchadnezzar, did usher in the destruction of the *Assyrian* Monarchy. And the ambition and Pride of *Cyrus*, that did usher in the overthrow of the *Babylonian* Monarchy. And the ambition and pride of *Alexander*, was the cause of the annihilation of the *Persian* Monarchy. And it was the Pride and ambition of the *Roman* Commanders, that was the cause of the utter subversion of the *Grecian* Monarchy. There is no tongue that can expresse, nor heart that can conceive the horrid sins and mileries that Pride hath ushered in among the children of men. All sin will down with a proud heart, that is resolved to rise. Great sins are no sins with such a soul, he makes nothing of those very sins that would make the very Heathen to blush.

The second Proposition that I shall lay down concerning Pride, is this,

where Pride hath possesst it self througly of the soul, it turns the heart into steel, yea, into a Rock.

As you may see in *Pharaoh*, Pride turned his heart into steel, yea, into a very Rock. God strikes again and again, he sends plague upon plague, &c yet the more he is plagued, the more he is hardened. His Pride turn'd his soul into a Rock; he is no more sensible of the frowns of God, the threatnings of God, the plagues, the strokes of God, then a Rock. Pride had hardened his heart, he stirs not, he yields not.

It was the Pride of *Saml* that turned his heart into steel. *I have sinned (saith he) yet honour me before the people.* God gave him many a blow, many a knock, and many a check, and yet after all, *Honour me before the people.* Oh how desperately was his heart hardened in Pride! In *Dan. 5. 18. Nebuchadnezzars mind (saith the Text) was hardened in Pride.* He saw the vengeance of the Almighty upon his Predecessors, and God took him up and laist him till the blood came, and yet he made nothing of it, because his heart was hardened in Pride. Pride sets a man in opposition against God. Other sins are averfions from God, but this sin is a coming against God. In other sins a man flies from God, but in this sin a man flies upon God. *James 4. 6. God resisteth the proud.* A

H

man

Proud souls are of his mind that said (*Non persuadebit, etiam si persuaserit*) Though you doe convince me, yet will I not be convinced.
1 Sam. 15. 30.

man doth not resist another, till he is set upon; the Travel-
ler doth not resist, untill such time as the Thief sets upon
him. Saith the Text, *God resisteth the proud*: It intimates thus
much to us, That the proud heart sets upon God himself, &
therefore God resists him. The Greek word is *Anisafeta*;
he places himself in Battell array against the proud. God
brings forth his *Battalia* against the proud, and they bring
forth their *Battalia* against God. A proud heart resists, and is
resisted, this is (*Duro durum*) flint to flint, fire to fire, yet in
the day of Gods wrath, the proud shall be burnt up as stub-
ble, both branch and root, *Mal. 4. 1.*

The third Proposition concerning Pride, is this.

*Pride is a sin that shales forth, and shews it self not one way, but
many ways.*

For instance:

*Profuso oculis
animus inhabi-
tat. Plin.*

First, Sometimes it shews it self in the looks. *Pro. 6. 17.*
he tells you of seven things that the Lord hates, and one is
a proud look. The Hebrew word there is, The haughty
eye. The haughty eye God hates. Mens hearts usually shew
themselves in their eyes. *Psal. 133. 1. Mine heart is not
haughty, nor mine eye lofty.* There be such who shew pride in
their very looks, but the Lord looks aloof at them, *Psalms
138. 6.*

Secondly, Sometimes Pride shews it self in words. *Dan.
4. 30. Is not this great Babylon that I have built, for the house of
the Kingdome, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my
Majesty? And in Ch. 3. 15. Who is that God that shall deliver
you out of my hands? It was a very proud saying of one (Co-
elum gratis non accipiam) I will not have Heaven, but at a rate.
And of another, We have not so liv'd, and deserved of
God, that the Enemy should vanquish us. These were the
proud ones, that spake loftily, and that set their mouths
against the Heavens, as the Psalmist speaks. *Psalms 73. 6.
8, 9. comp.* And such a one was Henry the Second, hearing
that his City Montz. was taken, he used this proud blasphemous
speech, *I shall never love God any more, that suffered a
City so dear to me, to be taken away from me.* Such a proud
wretch, both in words and actions, was Sennacherib, as
you*

you may see in *Iſa. 27.* from *Verſ. 8.* to *18.*

Thirdly, Sometimes pride ſhews it ſelf in the habit of the body. So *Herods* pride appeared, *Acts 12. 21.* *Herod was arrayed in Royal apparrell. In cloath of ſilver* (ſaith *Joſephus*) which being beaten upon by the Sun-beams, dazled the peoples eyes, and drew from them that blaſphemous Acclamation, *It is the voyce of God, and not of man.* (The people being moſt commonly like the *Bohemian Curs*, that uſed to fawn upon a good Sure.) So the Rich man, *Luke 16. 19.* was cloathed in Purple (& *Silk*) and in Silk. He was commonly ſo cloathed, it was his every-dayes wear, as the Greek word implyeth.

in diſuſen

But here a Queſtion may be aſkt, May not perſons habit themſelves according to their dignities, ranks, and places that God hath put them in, in the world?

Queſt.

Answer, They may and ought ſo to do, if God hath liſted them up in the world above others, they may wear better Apparel then others, *Gen. 41. 42. Eſth. 8. 8. Pſa. 45. 13, 14. 2 Sam. 13. 18. Lam. 4. 5. Mat. 11. 8. Gen. 27. 15 Iſa. 52. 1. Hoſ. 1. 13. Exod. 28. 40.* I cite theſe Scriptures ſo much the rather, becauſe ſome through weakneſs and peevilineſs ſtumble, and are not ſatisfied herein. There is nothing in the Law of God or Nature againſt it.

Queſt.

But you may ſay, May not perſons ſin in their Apparel?

Answer, Yes, and that in four caſes.

1. When 'tis not Modest, but carries with it provocation to luſt and wantonneſſe. *Pro. 7. 10.* *There met the young man a woman, in the Attire of an Harlot.* The Hebrew word ſignifies a Habit or Ornament finely ſet and fitted to the body. And ſaith the Text, *She was ſubtil of heart, or truſt up about the Breasts, with her upper parts naked, ſo Levi-Ben-Gerson reads the words, She met him with her naked Breasts.* At this day too commonly uſed by ſuch as would not be held Harlots. Oh what a horrid ſhame and reproach is it to Religion, the wayes of God, and the people of God, that Profeſſors ſhould go ſo! One ſaith, That ſuperfluous Apparel is worſe then whoredom, becauſe whoredom

Answer.

only corrupts chastity, but this corrupts Nature. Another saith, If women adorn themselves so as to provoke men to lust after them, though no ill follow upon it, yet those women shall suffer eternal damnation, because they offered poyson to others, though none could drink of it.

2 Persons sin in their Apparel, when as they exceed their degree and rank, in costly Apparel, which is that which is condemned by the Apostle, *1 Tim. 2. 9. 1 Pet. 3. 3.* The Apostle doth not simply condemn the wearing of Gold, but he condemns it in those that go above their degree and rank. The words are rather an Admonition, then a Prohibition.

3 It's sinful, when 'tis so expensive as that it hinders works of Mercy and Charity. Oh how many proud souls be there in these dayes, that lay so much upon their backs, that they can spare nothing to fill the Poores bellies, *Silk doth quench the fire of the Kitchen*, saith the French Proverb. The meaning is, that it doth hinder works of Charity and Mercy. Surely those that put on such costly Ornaments upon their backs, as close up the hand of Charity, will at last share with *Dives* in his misery.

4 When persons habit themselves in strange and forraign fashions, which is the sin, shame, and reproach of many among us in these dayes. Now that is strang Apparel which is not peculiar to the Nations where men live. The Lord threatens to punish such, *Zeph. 1. 8.* that are clothed with strange Apparel. There are too many women and men in our dayes, that are like the *Egyptian* Temples, very Gypsies, painted without, and spotted within; varnish without, and vermin within.

Mercury being to make a Garment for the Moon (as one saith) could never fit her, but either the Garment would be too big, or too little, by reason she was alwayes increasing or decreasing. May not this be applied to the vain curiosity of too too many Professors in these dayes, whose curiosity about their cloaths can never be satisfied.

I shall conclude this Head with this counsel, *Cloath yourselves with the Silk of Piety, with the Saffron of Sanctity,*
and

and with the Purple of Adultery, and God himself will be a Surer to you. Let not the Ornaments upon your backs, speak out the vanity of your hearts.

Fourthly, Sometimes Pride shews it self by the gesture and carriage of the body. In *Iſa. 3. 16.* the Daughters of *Sion* were haughty; and walked with stretched out necks, and mantled eyes, walking and mincing as they go, making a tinkling with their feet. Oh Earth! Earth I doſt thou not groan to bear ſuch Monsters as theſe?

Fifthly, And ſometimes Pride ſhews it ſelf in contemptuous challenges of God; as *Pharaoh*, who is the God of the *Hebrews*, ſays I ſhould obey him?

Sixthly, Sometimes Pride ſhews it ſelf by bragging promiſes, *I will ariſe, I will purſue, I will overtake, I will divide the ſpoil, and my ſiſters ſhall be ſerſified.*

Exod. 14.

The fourth Proposition that I ſhall lay down, is this, *Pride is a ſin that of all ſins makes a man or woman moſt like to Satan.*

Pride is (*Morbus Satanicus*) *Satans* Diſeaſe. Pride is ſo baſe a Diſeaſe, that God had rather ſee his deareſt children to be buffeted by *Satan*, then that in pride they ſhould be like to *Satan. 2 Cor. 12. 7.* when *Paul* under the abundance of Revelations, was in danger of being puſt up, the Lord rather then he would have him proud, like to *Satan*, ſuffers him to be buffeted by *Satan*. Humility makes a man like to Angels, and Pride makes an Angel a Devil, Pride is worſe then the Devil, for the Devil cannot hurt thee, till Pride hath poſſeſt thee. If you would ſee the Devil limned to the life, look upon a proud ſoul; for as face answers to face, ſo doth a proud ſoul answer to *Satan*. Proud ſouls are *Satans* Apes, and none imitate him to the life like theſe: And Oh that they were ſenſible of it, before it be too late, before the door of darkneſſe be ſhut upon them.

A fifth Proposition is this,

Pride cannot climb ſo high, but juſtice will ſit above her.

One aſks a Philoſopher, what God was a doing, he answered, That his whole work was to exalt the humble, & pull down the Proud. It was pride that turned Angels into Devils,

The Unsearchable Riches of Christ.

wils, they would be above others in Heaven, and therefore God cast them down to Hell. Pride (saith *Hugo*) was born in Heaven, but forgetting by what way she fell from thence she could never find the way thither again. The first man would know as God, and the *Babel* builders would dwell as God, but Justice set above them all. This truth you see verified in the Justice of God upon *Pharaoh*, *Haman*, *Herod*, *Belshazzar*, and *Nebuchadnezzar*; all these would be very high, but Justice takes the right hand of them all, and brings them down to the dust. Yea Pride cannot climb so high in the hearts of Saints, but Divine Justice will be above it. *Uzziah* his heart was lifted up, *2 Chron.* 26, 27, but Justice smites him with a Leprosie, and so he died, out of grief and sorrow, saith *Jesephus*. *David* glories in his own greatness, *2 Chron.* 29, 32. and for this seventy thousand fall by the hand of Justice. *Hezekiah's* heart was lifted up, but wrath was upon him, and upon all *Judah* and *Jerusalem* for it, *2 Chron.* 29, 32, 33. Pride sets it self against the Honour, Being, and Sovereignty of God, and therefore Justice will in spite of all, sit above her. Other sins strike at the word of God, the people of God, and the creatures of God, but Pride strikes directly at the very Being of God, and therefore Justice will be above her.

Nebuchadnezzar was proud, and God smites his reason, and turns him into a Beast. Oh how many young Professors are therein our days, who have been proud of their notions, and proud of their parts and gifts, and Justice hath so smitten them, that they have lost that life, that sweetness, that spiritual nestle, that quicknesse that once they had, and are dried & shrivel'd up by a hand of Justice. They are like the Apples of *Sodom*, glorious without, but rotten & worthless within. Some there are that have been very shining, yet by reason of Pride have fallen from a seeming excellency, to be naught, and from naught, to be very naught, and from very naught, to be stark naught. *Isa.* 23, 9. The Lord of Hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt (or to make light) all the honorable of the earth. The Hebrew word that is here rendered Purposed, signifies

Suspicious was proud of his Memory, and Justice smote it.

nifies to consult, or take counsel. It is consulted, and agreed upon in council, that he will stain the pride of all glory, and bring into contempt the honourable of the earth; and the counsel of the Lord shall stand, *Psalm 33. 11. Isa. 2. 11, 12.* The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtinesse of man shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low.

733
Deliberately
to consult and
agree upon a
thing.

Divine Justice will take the right hand of all proud ones on the Earth. God bears (as I may say) a special spleen against Pride. His heart hates it, *Pro. 6. 16, 17.* His mouth curses it, *Psalm 119. 21.* And his hand plagueth it, as you have seen in the former instances, and as you may see further in these following instances.

The King of Egypt, that *Jeremiah* prophesied against, in his 44 Chap. was so puffed up with Pride, that he boasted his Kingdom was so surely settled, that it could not be taken from him either by God or man; not long after he was taken in Battle by *Nubus*, one of his own Subjects, and hanged up.

Dionysius the Tyrant, said in the Pride of his heart, That his Kingdome was bound to him with chains of Adamant; but time soon consulted him, for he was driven out, and forced to teach a School at *Corinth*, for a poor living.

Cress, a Souldier being proud of his valour because he had given *Cyrus* a great wound, shortly after he ran mad. In all Ages there are notable instances to prove that Pride has not got so high, but Justice has set above her.

The sixth Proposition is this.

Of all sin spiritual Pride is most dangerous, and must be most resisted.

Spiritual Pride is the lifting up of the mind against God; it is a tumor and swelling in the mind, &c. lies in contemning and slighting of God, his Word, Promises, &c. Ordinances, and in the lifting up of a mans self, by reason of birth, breeding, wealth, honor, place, relation, gifts or graces, and in despising of others. Of this spiritual Pride *Hubb* speaks Chap.

Si salvabor,
salvabor: Si
vero damnabor,
damnabor.

Chap. 2.4. His heart that is lifted up in him, is not upright.
Prov. 16. 5. Every one that is proud in heart, is an abomination
to the Lord: or, *That lifts up his heart against God, or his De-*
crees: as Lewis the eleventh did, in that proud speech of his,
If I shall be saved, I shall be saved; and if I shall be damned, I shall
be damned; and there's all the cure that I shall take. Like to this,
was that proud and wretched speech of one *Ruffus*; who
painted God on the one side of his Shield, and the Devil
on the other, with this mad Motto, *If thou wilt not have me,*
here's one will. Spiritual Pride is a white Devill, as one calls
it, a gilded Poyson, by which God is robbed of his ho-
nour, a mans own soul of his comfort and peace, and others
of that benefit and fruit which otherwise they might re-
ceive from us. Satan is fittle, he will make a man proud
of his very Graces: He will make him proud, that he is not
proud. Pride grows with the decrease of other sins, and
thrives by their decay. Other sins are nourished by poy-
founous Roots, as Adultery is nourished by idleness; and
Gluttony and Murder, by malice and envy: But this white
Devill, spiritual Pride, springs from good duties, and good
actions, towards God and man. Spiritual Pride is a very
great enemy to the good and salvation of man. Pride is
like a very great swelling, which unfits men for any ser-
vice.

Again, Spiritual Pride is a very great enemy to the good
and salvation of men. The Greek word signifies *swellings*, for
Pride is like a great swelling in the body, which unfits it
for any good service. *John 5. 40. You will not come to me, that*
you may have life. And Jer. 44. How can ye believe in me, which
seek honour one of another? Christ blesses his Father, *Mat. 11.*
that he had hid these things from the wise and prudent, and had
revealed them unto Babes and Sucklings. 'Tis the pride of mens
hearts that makes them throw off Ordinances, as poore
and low things, when alas in their practices they live be-
low the power, beauty, glory, and holiness of the least and
lowest Ordinance. There's more holiness, purity and
glory manifested in the lowest Administrations of Christ,
then is held forth by them, in their highest practices.

The

The seventh Proposition is this.

Pride un-mans a man, it makes him do acts that are below a man.

As you may see in *Pharaoh, Haman, Herod, Nebuchadnezzar, &c.* It makes men Bodlams, to say they know not what, and to do they care not what. It was Pride that made *Hillebrand* to cause *Henry the Fourth* to stand 3 dayes at his Gate, with his Wife, and his Child, barefooted. It was Pride that made *Adonibezek* cause three-score and ten Kings (with their Thumbs and great Toes cut off) to gather their meat under his Table. Oh what wretched un-manly acts hath the Pride of many persons put them upon!

Judges 1. 3, 6, 7.

The eighth Proposition is this.

The Poorest are oftentimes the Proudest.

Pretty is the Parable of *Jotham*, The best Trees refused to be King, but the Bramble affected it; and did (*sperare & aspirare*) hope and aspie it, *Judges 9. 15.* So in *2 Kings 14. 9.* The Thistle that was in *Lebanon*, sent to the Cedar that was in *Lebanon*, saying, Give thy Daughter to my Son to Wife. *Hagar* the Kitchen-maid will be Proud, and insult over her Mistresse *Sarah*. The Poor Sons of *Zebedee* would sit at Christs right hand, and left. And those that *Job* disdain to sit with the Dogs of his flock, yet content in him in the day of his sorrow. The foot strives to be equal with the head, the Servant as his Master, the Cocker as the Councillor; and the Peasant as the Prince, &c.

Gen. 21.
Mat. 20. 20,
21.
Job 30. 1.

The ninth Proposition is this.

Pride is a sure fore-runner of a fall.

Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty mind before a fall. *Herod* fell from a Throne of Gold, to a Bed of Dust. *Nebuchadnezzar* fell from the state of a mighty King, to be a Beast. *Adam* fell from Innocency to Mortality. The Angels fell from Heaven to hell, from Felicity to misery.

Prov. 16. 18.
Chap. 18. 12.

The tenth and last Proposition is this.

God will by an invisible Power, carry the day against proud souls.

You that it escape, and ruffle it out, and carry it with a high hand, remember this, God will by an invisible power carry

Pope Innocent the fourth, as he was walking in his Pallace heard that sorrowfull & dreadful Sunmons (*Veni miser in iudicium*) Come thou wretch, receive thy judgement, and soon after he was found dead. Eccl. 8. 11.

carry the day against you, when you think not of it, he will eat you like a Moth. *Isa. 47. 10, 11.* For thou hast trusted in thy wickednesse, thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge hath perverted thee. And thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else besides me. Therefore shall evil come upon thee, thou shalt not know from whence it riseth; and mischief shall fall upon thee, thou shalt not be able to put it off. And desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know. Impunity oftentimes causeth impudency, but (*Quod desertum non auferitur*) Forbearance is no Acquittance. The longer the hand is lifted up, the heavier will be the blow at last. Of all Mettals, Lead is the coldest, but being melted, it becomes the hottest. Humble souls knows how to apply this, and Proud souls shall sooner or later experience this.

I shall now proceed to a second Obseruation,

Namely.

That all Saints are not of an equal size and growth in Grace and Holinesse.

Some are higher, and some are lower; some are stronger, and some are weaker, in spiritual graces, and heavenly excellencies. *Unto me who am lesse then the least, &c.*

Among true Believers, some may be found to be but weak Believers. This Point flows as naturall from the words, as the stream does from the Fountain; and no Point more clear in all the Scripture then this.

In *Rom. 14. 1.* you read of some that are weak in the faith. *Them that are weak in the faith receive,* saith the Apostle. None are to be rejected in whom (*aliquid Christi*) any thing of Christ is to be found. And so *Matth. 14. 31.* there is mention made of little faith. *1 Cor. 9. 22.* *To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak.* You read of Babes in Grace, *1 Pet. 2. 2, 3.* *As newborn Babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* *1 John 2. 12, 13, 14.* There is mention made of little children, of young men, and of Fathers. All are not Fathers in grace, nor all are not young men in grace, there are some children in grace. A Christian in this life hath his degrees of growth; he is first

first a Child in Grace, and then a young man in Grace, and then a Father in Grace.

For the further opening of this Point, I shall endeavour these four things.

- 1 I shall endeavour to decipher to you souls weak in Grace.
- 2 I shall endeavour to lay down those things that may encourage, support and comfort souls that are weak in Grace.
- 3 I shall speak to the Duties that lye upon those that are weak in Grace.
- 4 The duties that lye upon those that are strong in grace, towards those that are weak in grace.

Of these four we shall speak, as the Lord shall assist.

I shall begin with the first, To decipher souls weak in Grace.

The first thing by which I shall decipher souls weak in Grace, is this.

Weak Christians are usually carried much out after the poor low things of this world.

They are much in carking and caring for them, & in pursuing and hunting greedily after them. That's a clear Text for this, *Mat. 6. 24.* to the end. Christ labors by several weighty arguments to fence & fortifie his Disciples against those diffident, doubtful, carking cares that divide, distract, distemper, torture & tear the heart in a thousand pieces. And yet neither these arguments, nor yet the presence of him who was the great Landlord of Heaven & Earth (& whose love & bowels were still yerning towards them, and whose special eye of Providence was still over them) could rid their heads and hearts of these worldly cares (that doe but vex and perplex the souls of men.) And 'tis very observable, that after this smart Lecture that Christ had read them, they did strive three several times who should be greatest & highest in worldly enjoyments. Their hearts should have bin only in Heaven, and yet they strive for Earth, as if there were no Heaven, or as if Earth were better then Heaven. All which does clearly evidence, that their Graces were ve-

It is with Christians as 'tis with Planets; the Moon goes her course in a month, the Sun in a year, the rest not in many years yet at length they finish.

Jer. 45. 1. to 5.

ry weak, and their corruptions very strong. Men that have little of the upper Springs within, are carried out much after the Springs below. *Baruch* was good, but weak in grace, he had but some sips & tastes of the glory of that other world, and that made him (when God was a pulling down all worldly glory) to seek for Earth, as if there were no Heaven. Certainly there is but little of Christ and grace within, where the heart is so strongly carried out after these things without. Where there is such strong love, and workings of heart after these poor things, it speaks out souls enjoyment of God, to be but poor and low.

In the Old Testament, the *Jews* being Babes and Infants in grace and holiness, had a world of Temporal Promises, & very few Spiritual Promises. But now in the dayes of the Gospel, the Lord is pleased to double and treble his Spirit upon his People, & now you meet with very few temporal Promises in the Gospel, but the Gospel is fill'd with spiritual Promises. The Gospel drops nothing but marrow and fatness, love and sweetness; & therefore God looks in these dayes that men should grow up to a greater height of holiness, heavenliness, and spiritualness, then what they attained to in those dark dayes, wherein the Sun shin'd but dimly. Men rich and strong in grace, look upon the world with a holy scorn and disdain, as *Themistocles*, when he saw in the dark a thing like a pearl, he scorn'd to stoop for it himself, saying to another, *Stoop thee, for thou art not Themistocles*. *Abraham*, a man strong in grace, look't with a holy scorn, and with an eye of disdain upon these poor things. When *Melchisedech* from God had made him Heir of all things, he refused the riches that the King of *Sodom* offered him, because God was his Shield, and his exceeding great Reward. The greatest bargain that a soul rich in Grace will make with God for himself, is this, Give me but bread to eat, and cloaths to wear, and thou shalt be my God. So it was with that brave soul, *Gen. 28. 21.* he desires but Food & Rayment. Mark, he asks food, no junkets; rayment, not ornaments. A little will serve a man that is strong in grace, much will not serve a man that is weak in grace, nothing will

Gen. 14. 21.
Chap. 15. 1.

will serve a man that is void of grace. Souls weak in grace, have their hearts much working after these poor low things, as you may see, *Mat. 18. 1. Who shall be greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?* The Question is stated by the Disciples, that one would have thought should have had their hearts and thoughts in heaven, but they dream'd of an earthly Kingdom, where honours and Offices should be distributed, as in the dayes of *David* and *Solomon*. And 'tis observable in *Mark 9. 33, 34.* they are at it again, *And he came to Capernaum, and being in the House, he asked them, what was it that ye disputed among your selves by the way? But they held their peace (they were ashamed to tell him) for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be greatest.* Saith one I'll have this, and saith another, I'll have that, &c. Or as 'tis in the Greek, *They disputed who was greatest.* Sayes one, I am greater then thou; no, sayes another, I am greatest. It is an argument of a childish disposition, to be taken more with Rattles and Baubles, then with Jewels and Pearls. That Christian hath little of the power of grace within him, whose heart is so strongly carried out to these vanities below. Men that are grown up to years of understanding, prefer one piece of gold above a thousand new counters. A soul that is strong in grace, that is high in its spiritual enjoyments, prefers one good word from God, one good look from Christ, above all the glory of this world. *Lord (saith he) lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me.* Warm my heart with the beams of thy love, and then a little of these things will suffice. You see *Moses*, &c all those Worthies in the 11 of the *Heb.* (who were men strong in grace) how bravely they trample upon all things below God, they left their Families, and their Countries (where they liv'd like Princes) to wander in a Wildernesse, upon the bare Command of God. So *Luther* (a man strong in grace) when he had a Gown and Money given him by the Elector, he turned himself about, and said, *I protest God shall not put me off with these poor low things.* Souls that know (by experience) what the bosome of Christ is, what spiritual communion is, what the glory of Heaven is, will not be put off by God nor man, with things that are

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So in Luke 9.
46.

*'tis not my
To meign.
Who was
greatest.*

The Philoso-
phers prefer-
red the Kings
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mixt, mutable and momentary. And to shame many Professors in these dayes, I might bring in a cloud of witnesses; even from among the very Heathen, who never heard of a crucified Christ, and yet were more crucified to things below Christ, then many of them that pretend much to Christ. But I shall forbear, onely desiring that those that think and speak so scornfully and contemptuously of Heathens, may not at last be found worse then Heathens; yea, be judged and condemned by Heathens, in the great and terrible day of the Lord.

Secondly, In order to a further deciphering of weak Christians, I shall lay down this.

That weak Saints do usually over-fear troubles before they come; yea, those future evils that forty to one may never fall out.

The very empty thoughts, and conceit of trouble, is very terrible and perplexing to a weak Saint. When it was told the house of David, saying, *Syria is confederate with Ephraim*, his heart was moved, and the heart of his People, as the Trees of the wood are moved with the wind, *Isa. 7. 2.* Their heart quaked and quivered (as we say) like an Aspen leaf. It is an Elegant expression, shewing (in their extremity) the baseness of their fears, arguing no courage or spirit at all in them. The very newes and conceit of trouble or calamities, O how doth it perplex, and vex, and grieve, and overwhelm weak Christians! The very hearing of trouble at a distance, makes them to stagger and reel, and ready to say, *Will God now save? Will he now deliver?* It puts them into those shaking fits, that they know not what to do with themselves, nor how to perform the service they owe to God or man. Now tell me, can you call that a stout spirit, a strong spirit, that is daunted with the very report, and thoughts of calamity? Or that does torment men with immoderate fear of a thousand things that happily shall never fall out; as fears of forraign invasions, or tears of home-bred confusions; fears of change of Religion, or being surprized with such or such Diseases; or being ruin'd in their outward estate, by such and such devises, or disadvantages, or by falling under the frowns of

The Chomelion (saith Pliny) is the most fearful of all Creatures, and doth therefore turn into all colours to save it selfe; and so 'tis often with weak Christians.

Pray for me (saith Latimer in his Letter to Ridley) for I am sometimes so fearful, that I would creep into a Moule-hole. *Acts & Mon. 1565.*

of such a great man, or under the anger and revenge of such and such a man, and a thousand such like things. Now this speaks out much weakness in grace. Souls strong in grace are carried up above these fears, yea, with the *Leviathan* (in *Job*) they can laugh at the shaking of the spear. They can say with *David*, *I though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we will fear no evil, for thou art with us, thy rod and thy staffe doe comfort us.* But weak souls are afraid of their own shadow: The very shadow of trouble, will exceedingly trouble such souls, and oftentimes make their lives a very Hell.

Thirdly,

Fainting in the day of adversity, speaks out a soul to be but weak in grace.

Weak Christians are overcome with little crosses; the least crosse doth not only startle them, but it sinks them, and makes them ready to sit down, and to cry out with the Church, *Behold you that passe by, see whether there be any sorrow like my sorrow.* Before trouble comes, weak Christians are apt to think that they can bear much, and endure much, but alas when the day of Tryal comes upon them, when they are put to it, they prove but men of poor and impotent spirits, and then they roar, and complain, and lye down in the dust, suffering crosses and losses to bind them hand and foot, and to spoyle them of all their comforts. And now though they have many comforts for one crosse, yet one crosse doth so damp and daunt their hearts, that joy and comfort flies away from them, and they sit down overwhelmed. Certainly this speaks out little of Christ within. All *Rachels* comforts were no comforts, because her children were not. This speaks out much weakness within.

Pro. 24. 10. If thou faintest in the day of adversity, thy strength is small. If thou shrinkest, if thou abatest and slackest in the day of adversity thy strength is small. Man hath no trial of his strength, till he be in trouble; faintness then discovers weakness. Afflictions try what sap we have, as hard weather tries what health we have. A weak Christian sinks under a little burden; every frown, every sowe word, every

*Iob 41. 29.
Psal. 23. 4.*

Bucephalus was not afraid of his burden, the shadow only frightened him. So weak Christians are afraid of the shadow of the Crosse.

Lam. 1. 12.

*Job 41. 29.
Psal. 23. 4.
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Psal. 23. 4.
Lam. 1. 12.*

puffe of wind blows him down, and makes him sink under his burden. But now a soul strong in grace, bears up bravely against all winds and wither. That's a brave Text (& worthy to be written in letters of gold) that you have in Gen. 49. 23, 24. *Josephs Bow abode in strength, though the Archers sorely grieved him, shot at him, and hated him. And the arms of his hands were made strong, by the mighty God, of Jacob.* The Archers that sorely grieved him, were his Barbarous Brethren that sold him, his Adulterous Mistresse that Harlot-like hunted for his precious life, his injurious Master, that without any desert of his, imprisoned him; the tumultuating Egyptians, that were pined with hunger, perhaps spake of stoning him; and the envious Courtiers and Inchanters spake evilly of him before Pharaoh, to bring him out of favour. All these shot sorely at him. The word that is rendered *Archers*, in the Hebrew is, *Arrow-masters*, which term implyeth cunning & skilfulnes in shooting. They were cunning and skilful to hit the mark, and they shot at him, as at a mark: But yet *His Bow abode in strength*. When God in the midst of weaknes makes a soul strong, that soul will not only face enemies and difficulties, but triumph over them. Those that are strong in grace, seldome want courage or counsel, when they are at the worst. They alwayes find their hope to be an Anchor at Sea, and their faith a Shield upon Land; and therefore they triumph in all storms and dangers: They stand firm when they are under the greatest pressures. 2 Cor. 11. 23. *In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths often, &c.* And yet he triumphs in 2 Cor. 1. 12. *Our joycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in singleness and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards.* Strong Paul joyced in his sufferings for Christ, and therefore often sings it out, *I Paul a Prisoner of Jesus Christ*, not, *I Paul* wrapt up in the third Heaven. He prefer'd his Crown of Thorns before a Crown of gold; his Prison Rags, above all Royal Robes.

Fourthly, A weak Christian thinks that little to be much that he suffers for Christ. In

If we perish,
Christ peris-
eth with us,
said Luther.

In *Mat. 19. 27.* Then answered Peter, and said unto him, *Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee, what shall we have?* Their worldly ease in following Christ, was little worse then when they only Traded in Fishing; and yet, *We have forsaken all, and followed thee, what shall we have?* This their All was not worth a speaking of, and yet for this they look for some great worldly reward and recompence. *We have forsaken all.* A great All sure, a few broken Boats, and a few tattered and torn Nets, and a little old Household-stuffe, and Christ maintain'd them too, upon his own cost and charge; and yet say they, *We have forsaken all, and followed thee.* Neither is it without an Emphasis, that they begin with a *Behold, Behold we have forsaken all,* as if Christ were greatly beholding to them. Let their wills but be crost a little, by servants, children, friends, &c. Or let them but suffer a little in their Names or Estates, &c. and presently you shall have them a sighing it out, *No sorrow like our sorrow, no losse to our losse, no crosse to our crosse, &c.* Whereas souls strong in grace, suffer much, and yet count that much but little. A soul strong in grace, can suffer much, and yet make nothing of it. I am heartily angry (saith *Luther*, who suffered very much) with those that speak of my sufferings, which if compared with that which Christ suffered for me, are not once to be mentioned in the same day, &c.

Fifthly,

Those that are weak in grace dwell more upon what may discourage them in the wayes of grace and holinesse, then they do upon what may encourage them.

They dwell more upon their sins, then upon a Saviour; more upon their misery, then upon free grace and Mercy; more upon that which may feed their fears, then upon that that may strengthen their faith; more upon the crosse, then upon the Crown; more upon those that are against them, then those that are for them. *Isa. 51. 12, 13. I, even I, am he that comforteth you. Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall dye, and of the Son of man, which shall be made as grasse, and forgettest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the Heavens, and laid the foundations of the*

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Earth,

Weak Christians are like Children, they look for a great reward for a little work.

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Earth, and hast feared continually every day, because of the fear of the Oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy, and where is the fear of the Oppressor? The same is intimated, Rom. 4. 19, 20. *Abraham being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body, being dead, nor yet the deadness of Sarahs womb.* Mark, *Being not weak in faith.* Souls weak in faith are very apt to dwell upon discouragements, but strong Christians look above all discouragements.

He considered not. The Greek is, *He cared not for his own body, he did not mind that; but in the 20 Verse, He considered him that had promised.* Souls strong in grace dwell more upon their encouragements to holiness and believing, then upon their discouragements. *He considered him that had promised.* He had an eye fixed upon the faithfulness of God, and the Sufficiency and Almightyness of God; and this bore up his heart above all discouragements. So in 2 Cor. 4. 16, 17, 18. *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory: While we look not (mark they are not doting upon their discouragements) upon things that are seen, but upon things that are not seen. The things which are seen, are temporall, but the things which are not seen, are eternall.* An eye fixt upon encouragements, makes heavy afflictions light, long afflictions short, and bitter afflictions sweet. Those blessed Martyrs found it so, that were cast out all night, in a cold frosty night, naked, and were to be burnt the next day; who thus comforted themselves, The winter is sharp, but Paradise is sweet; here we shiver for cold, but the bosom of *Abraham* will make amends for all. Weak Christians have eyes to behold their discouragements, but none to see their encouragements; they look more upon their corruption, then upon their sanctification; upon their disobedience, then their obedience; upon their distrust, then upon their faith; upon the old man, then upon the new; and this keeps them low and weak in spirituals, it causes a leanness in their souls.

Sixthly,

The zeal of weak Christians usually out-strips their wisdom and knowledge.

Weak

Weak Christians are very zealous, but not according to knowledge, *Rom. 10. 2. Per I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.* They are very peevish and pettish, and censorious; but they want wisdom and knowledge to mannage their zeal, to Gods glory, and their brethrens good. Such zeal had those two Rabbins that set upon *Charls* the fifth, to perswade him to turn Jew, as judging their Religion to be the only Religion in the world, and for which they were put to a cruel death, in the year 1530. A great zeal they had to the winning over of him to Judaism, but this zeal was their ruine. Zeal without knowledge is as wild fire in a fools hands, 'tis like the Devil in the *Demoniack*, that sometimes cast him into the fire, and sometimes into the water. So the Disciples of Christ were weak in their light, and furious in their zeal, *Luke 9. 54. Let fire come down from Heaven, and consume them, say they.* But mark what Christ saith, *vers. 55. Ye know not what manner of spirits ye are of.* That is, you know not what spirit acts you; you think that you are acted by such a spirit as *Elias* of old was acted by, but you erre, saith Christ, *You have a zeal, but not according to knowledge,* therefore 'tis a humane affection, and not a Divine motion. Zeal is like fire, in the Chimney 'tis one of the best servants, but out of the Chimney 'tis one of the worst Masters. Zeal kept by knowledge and wisdom, in its proper place, is a choice servant to Christ and Saints; but zeal not bounded by wisdom and knowledge, is the high-way to undoe all, and to make a Hell for many at once.

Weak Christians are usually most zealous about circumstances, &c things that have least of God and Christ, and the power of holiness in them; and most cold about substances, as woful experience doth evidence in these dayes. Zeal ordered by wisdom, feeds upon the faults of offenders, not on their persons: It spends it self, and its greatest heat principally upon those things that concern a mans self. 'Tis most exercised about substantials, *Tie. 2. 14.* But that which is rash, is most exercised about circumstantials, *Gal. 1. 14. Paul* was in the dayes of his ignorance, very zealous for the Traditions of his fathers, &c.

They were very zealous, but not true Zealots.

David Rubinita, and Sblomoh Molcha.
Alsted. Chr. 426.

Josephus in the 11. & 12. Chapters of his Book, tells you of some that imposed the name of Zelote upon themselves, as if they were zealous for the honour and service of God, and under this pretence committed all riots and imaginable wickednesse.

'Twere well if we had no such Monsters among us in these dayes.

Seventhly,

Among all Saints, the weakest Saints are most like carnal sinners.

No Saint so like a sinner, as a weak Saint, 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. And I Brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnall, even as unto Babes in Christ I have fed you with milke, and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able; for are ye not yet carnall? for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnall, and walk as men? for while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollo, are ye not carnall? They were advanced but very little above the imperfections, and passions, and sins of meer men, of such which had nothing of the spirit in them, &c. Do wicked men quarrel with their Teachers, as shallow trivial Teachers, when themselves are in fault, as being not capable of more mysterious matter? So did these Babes here. Do wicked men impute their not profiting to the Minister, as he that having a Thorn in his foot, complains of the roughness of the way, as the cause of his limping, when as it was the Thorn, and not the roughness of the way, that hurt him. Or as she that being struck with a suddain blindness, bid open the window, when as it was not the want of light, but want of sight, that troubled her. So did these Babes in the Text, lay the fault of their non-proficiency upon their Teachers, when the fault was wholly in themselves.

Now he calls them *Carnal*, partly because the flesh was strong in them, and partly because they followed and relished the things of the flesh, and partly because they did in their actions resemble carnal men. Do carnal and wicked men cry up one good man, and cry down another? Do they lift up one, and abase another? So did they. Are wicked men full of envy, strife, and divisions? So were they. And these overflowings of the Gall and Spleen, come from a fulness of bad humors, from that abundance of carnality that was in them. But now souls strong in grace, are higher then carnal men, as *Saul* was higher then the People, by head and shoulders. Souls strong in grace have their feet where carnal

In many things weak Christians are carnall mens. A per.

nal mens heads are. *Prov. 15. 24. The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from Hell beneath.* Souls that are strong in grace, do act rather like Angels, then like carnal men; they do as much resemble the father of Spirits, as carnal men do the father of Lyes.

Eighthly,

Souls weak in grace, are easily drawn aside out of the wayes of holinesse.

You know a man that hath but a little bodily strength, is easily thrust out of the way, so it is with souls weak in grace, *1 John 3. 7. Little Children, let no man deceive you: He that doth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous.* Saith the Apostle, *Little Children, let no man deceive you.* Many in these dayes (under pretences of high and glorious enjoyments of God) neglect and despise righteousness, and holinesse, crying up Visions and manifestations, when their Visions are only the Visions of their own hearts, and their Manifestations are plain delusions. Ah but sayes the Apostle, *Little Children, let none of these deceive you.* I tell you he (and only he) that doth righteousness, is righteous, as God is righteous. Children you know may be easily couzen'd, and made to take counters for gold, because they are broader, and brighter: Children in grace are soon deceived, hence is it that they are so couzened. *Little Children, keep your selves from idols.* So in *Heb. 12. 12, 13. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.* Some think that the Apostle alludes to those combates of the Heathens, wherein it was a token of yielding, when a man hung down his hands. You are weak, saith the Apostle, and by reason of Trials, you are apt to hang down your hands, and to give up all as lost, therefore (sayes he) *lift up your hands to fight, and your feet to run, take heart & courage, faint not, give not over, turn not aside because of the sharpnesse of afflictions.* But souls strong in grace, will hold on in the wayes of grace and holinesse, in the face of all dangers and deaths, *Psal. 44.*

Ninthly,

Weak Christians are apt to make sense and feeling the Judge of their spiritual estates and conditions.

1 John 5. 21. The Idols that are here mentioned, are surely those that the Gnosticks used to worship, viz. The Images and Pictures of Simon Magus, and Helena, as might be made evident out of Eusebius.

And

And therefore upon every turn they are apt to judge themselves miserable, and to conclude that they have no grace, because they cannot feel it, nor discern it, nor believe it, and so making sense, feeling and reason the judge of their estates, they wrong and perplex, and vex their precious souls, and make their lives a very Hell: As if it were not one thing to be the Lords, and another thing for a man to know that he is the Lords. As if it were not one thing for a man to have grace, and another thing to know that he hath grace.

Mat. 15.

The Canaanite woman had strong faith, but no assurance, that we read of. Gal. 4. 6. *And because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba Father.* Mark, they are first the Sons of God, and then the Spirit cries, *Abba father.* 1 John 3. 13. *These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternall life.* Mark, they did believe, and they had eternal life, in respect of Christ their head, who as a publick Person was gone to Heaven, to Represent all his Saints. And they had eternal life in respect of the Promises. And they had eternal life in respect of the beginnings of it, and yet they did not know it, they did not believe it. Therefore these things write I unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God (saith he) that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that this life is in his Son. Ponder on Mic. 7. 7, 8, 9. Much of this you may read in my Treatise call'd HEAVEN ON EARTH, or, A well-grounded Assurance of mens everlasting happinesse and blessednesse in this world, and to that I refer you.

John 12. 48.

The word shall judg us at last, and therefore strong Saints make only the word of God the judge of their spiritual condition now, as Constantine made it the Judge and decider of all Opinions.

Tenthly,

Their thoughts and hearts are more taken with the love-tokens, and the good things they have by Christ, then with the person of Christ.

O their graces, their comforts, their enlargements, their

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meltings, and their warmings, &c. are the things that most take them: Their thoughts and hearts are so exercised and carried out about these, that the Person of Christ is much neglected by them. The Child is so taken with Babies and Rattles, &c. that the Mother is not minded. And such is the carriage of weak Christians towards Christ. But now souls strong in grace, are more taken with the person of Christ, then they are with the love-tokens of Christ. They blesse Christ indeed for every dram of grace, and for every good word from Heaven, and for every good look from Heaven, I, but yet the person of Christ that's more to them then all these. This is remarkable in the Church, *Cant. 5. 9, 10. What is thy Beloved more then another beloved, O thou fairest among women? &c. My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefeft among ten thousand, &c.* She doth not say, My Beloved is one that I have got so many thousands by, and Heaven by, and pardon of sin by, and Peace of conscience by: Oh no, but he is white and ruddy. Her soul was taken most with the person of Christ. Not but that every one is to mind the graces of Christ, and to be thankful for them, I, but 'tis an Argument of weakness of grace, when the heart is more exercised about the Bracelets and the kisses, and the Love-tokens of Christ, then it is about the person of Christ. But now faith one strong in grace, My Bracelets are precious, but Christ is more Precious; the streams of grace are sweet, but the fountain of grace is most sweet; the beams of the Sun are glorious, but the Sun it self is most glorious. A naked Christ, a despised Christ, a Persecuted Christ, is more valued by a strong Christian, then Heaven and Earth is by a weak Christian.

Eleventhly,

Souls weak in grace are easily stopt and taken off from acting graciously and holily, when discouragements face them.

This you may see in that remarkable instance concerning Peter; in that 26 of Matthew, from the 69 to the end. A silly wench our faces him, she daunts & dispirits this self-confident Champion, she easily stops and turns him by saying, *Thou wast with Jesus of Galilee. v. 70. But he denied it before.*

Christ is the most sparkling Diamond in the Ring of glory, &c.

That Wife is but weak in her love, that is more taken with her Husbands Presents, then with his Person.

Christs person to a strong Christian, is the greatest Cordial in all the world.

before them all, saying, *I know not what thou sayest.* He makes as if he did neither understand her words or her meaning, & this false dissembling was a true denying of Christ. Now *Mark* saith, *Chap. 14. 68.* That upon the very first denial of Christ, the Cock crew, and yet this fair warning could not secure him, but when another Maid saw him, and said, *This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth,* v. 72. he denied it with an Oath, saying, *I do not know the man.* This was fearful and dreadful, and the worse because his Master whom he swore was now upon his Tryal, and might say with wounded *Cesar,* *What, and thou my Son Brutus!* Is this thy kind-ness to thy friend, to him that ha's loved thee, and saved thee, and owned thee? &c. Then v. 73. *Surely thou art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth thee.* And, v. 74. *He began to curse and to swear, I know not the man.*

The Greek word that's rendred *Curse*, imports a cursing and a damning of himself, an imprecation of Gods wrath, and a separation from the presence and glory of God, if he knew the man. Some Writers say, That he curst Christ, *I know not the man,* saith he. Though it were ten thousand times better to bear, then to swear, and to dye then to lye, yet when discouragement faces him, he is so amazed and daunted, that he tels the most incredible lye that almost could be uttered by the mouth of man. For there was scarce any Jew (saith *Grosius*) that knew not Christ by sight, being famous for those abundance of Miracles that he wrought before their eyes. Neither could *Peter* alledge any cause why he came thither, if he had not known Christ. But, v. 75. *He went out; and wept bitterly.* One sweet look of love breaks his heart in pieces, he melts under the beamings forth of Divine favour upon him. Once he leapt into a Sea of waters to come to Christ, and now he leaps into a Sea of tears for that he had so shamefully denved Christ. *Clement* notes, That *Peter* so repented, that all his life-time after, every night when he heard the cock crow, he would fall upon his knees and weep bitterly, begging pardon for this dreadful sin.

Others say, That after his lying, cursing, and denying of Christ, he was ever and anon weeping, and that his face

was

*Cavebuntur enim,
si pœnebis.*

Et of terror.

*et de Sepa-
re.*

Vide Calvin
on the Text,
In *Rom. 6. 19.*
There are 3
To's in the
expression of
the service of
sin, To un-
cleanness,
To iniquity,
and unto in-
iquity. But in
the service of
God there
are only two
To's, To righ-
teousness, and
unto holiness.
To note, that
we are more
prone to sin
before Con-
version, then
we are to
grace and ho-
liness after
conversion.

was furrowed with continual tears. He had no sooner taken in Poyson, but he vomits it up again, before it got to the vitals. He had no sooner handled a Serpent, but he turns it into a Rod to scourge his soul with remorse. This truth is further confirmed by the speech and carriage of the Disciples, *Luke. 24. 21. to vs. We trusted (say they) that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel*, but now we cannot tell what to say to it. Here their hope hangs the wing extremly. Weak souls find it as hard to wait for God, as 'tis to bear evil. This weakness Christ checks, *Verf. 25. O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken, &c. And John 16. 5. The first News Christ tells them, is of their sufferings, and of his leaving of them, and upon the thoughts hereof their hearts were so filled with sorrow, that they could not so much as say, Master whither goest thou? Ver. 6. But now souls strong in grace, will hold on in holy and gracious a'ctings, in the very face of the greatest discouragements, as those in *Psal. 44. Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of Dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death, yet our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy wayes.* And so the three Children, they hold up in the face of all discouragements. And so those brave Worthies, of whom this world was not worthy, *Heb. 11. their hearts were carried out exceedingly, notwithstanding all discouragements, to hold on in wayes of holiness, and in their a'ctings of faith upon God, in the face of all dangers and deaths that did attend them.**

When *He 77* the Eighth had spoken and written bitterly against *Luther*, saith *Luther*, Tell the *Henric*, the Bishops, the Turks, and the Devil himself, Do what they can, we are children of the Kingdom wth shipping of the true God, whom they, and such as they spit upon, and crucified. And of the same spirit and mettal, were many Martyrs, *Basil* affirms of the Primitive Saints, That they had so much courage and confidence in their sufferings, that many of the Heathens seeing their heroeick zeal and constancy, turned Christians.

Twelfthly.

Weak Saints mind their wages and vails, more then the'r work.

L

Their.

Invalidum, omne naturæ quæritum. Senect. Weak spirits are ever quarrelling and contending.

Such a spirit shin'd in *Chrysostome*, when he bid them tell the enraged *Empress Eudoxia*, Nil nisi peccatum timeo. I fear nothing but sin.

Children
mind more
Play-dayes,
then they do
working-dayes
or School-
dayes.

1 Sam. 15. 14.

Rom. 4. 18,
19, 20.

Their wages, their vails, is joy, peace, comfort and assurance, &c. and their work is waiting on God, believing in God, walking with God, acting for God, &c. Now weak Saints minds are more carried out, and taken up about their wages, about their vails, then they are about their work, as experience doth abundantly evidence. Ah Christians! if you don't mind your wages more then your work, what means the bleating of the sheep, and the lowing of the Oxen? what means those earnest & vehement cryings out, & wrestlings for joy, peace, comfort, & assurance, when the great work of believing, of waiting, and of walking with God, is so much neglected & dis-regarded? But now strong Saints are more mindful of their work, then they are of their wages. Lord, saith a strong Saint, do but uphold me in a way of believing in a way of working, in a way of holy walking, &c. and it shall be enough, though I should never have assurance, comfort, peace or joy, till my dying day. If thou wilt carry me forth so as thou mayest have honour, though I have no comfort; so thou mayst have glory, though I have no peace, I will bless thee. I know, sayes such a soul, though a life of comfort be most pleasing to me, yet a life of believing (abstracted from comfort) is most honorable to thee, & therefore I will be silent before thee. Lord do but help me in my work, and take thine own time to give me my wages, to give me comfort, joy, peace, assurance. They are none of the best Servants, that mind their wages more then their work, nor they are none of the best Christians, that mind their comforts and their incomes, more then that homage and duty that they owe to God.

Before I come to the second thing promised, give me leave to give you this hint, viz. That there is no such way to Joy, peace and assurance, as this, to mind your work more then your wages. Ah! had many mourning, complaining Christians done thus, their mourning before this had been turned into rejoycing, and their complaining, into singings. Christians, the high way to comfort, is to mind comfort less, and duty more; 'tis to mind more what thou shouldest do, then what thou wouldst have, as you may see in Eph. 1. 13.

In

In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of faith, the Gospel of your salvation. In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of Promise.

The Original runs thus, *In whom believing, you were sealed.* While faith is buffed, and exercised about Christ, and those varieties of glories and excellencies that are in him, the Lord comes, and by his spirit seals up the life and love, and glory of them.

Thus by Divine assistance I have dispatched the first thing, viz. The deciphering of weak Christians.

The second thing that I propounded for the further opening and clearing of this Point, was, To hold forth to you those things that tend to support, comfort, & uphold weak Christians. And truly I must needs say, that if ever there were a time wherein weak Christians had need of support, I verily believe this is the time wherein we live, for by the horrid prophaneſs of men on the one hand, & the abominable loose, & rotten Principles of others on the other hand, the hearts of many weak Christians especially, are sadded, that God would not have sadded and their spirits wounded and grieved, that God would have comforted & healed, & therefore I shall dwell the longer upon this second thing.

And the first thing that I shall lay down by way of support, is this.

That the weakest Christians have as much interest and Propriety in Christ, and all the fundamentall good that comes by Christ, as the strongest Saints in the world have.

Weak Saints are as much united to Christ, as much justified by Christ, as much reconciled by Christ, and as much Pardoned by Christ, as the strongest Saints. 'Tis true, weak Christians cannot make so much improvement & advantage of their interest in Christ, as strong Saints can; they have not that power, that wisdom, that spiritual skill to make that advantage of their interest & Propriety in Christ as strong Saints have; yet have they as much interest & Propriety in the Lord Jesus, & all the fundamentall good that comes by him, as the strongest St. that breaths. The sucking child hath as much interest & propriety in the father, & in

2d. 2d. 1550.
CXXV.

Support 1.

He that lookt upon the brazen Serpent, though with a weak sight, was healed as thoroughly as he that lookt upon it with a stronger sight. A weak faith is a joint possessor, though no faith can be a joynt purchaser of Christ.

is the fathers, as the child that's grown up to age. Though the young child ha's not that skil, nor that power, nor wisdom to improve that interest to his advantage, as he that's grown up in years hath. It's just so here, a soul weak in grace, hath as much interest in the Lord as the strongest Saint hath, though he hath not that skil to improve that interest. And is not this a singular comfort and support? Verily were there no more to bear up a poor weak Saint from tainting under all his sins, and sorrows, and sufferings, yet this alone might do it, &c.

Support 2.

The second support and comfort to weak Saints, is this.

That God doth with an eye of love reflect upon the least good that is in them, or done by them.

The least star
gives light,
the least drop
moistens.

And is not this a glorious comfort and support, that the Lord looks with an eye of love upon the least good that's in you, or done by you? You cannot have a good thought, but God looks upon that thought with an eye of love. *Psal. 32. 5. I said I would confesse my sin, and thou forgavest mine iniquity.* I said it in my thoughts, that I would confesse my sin, and thou presently meeting me with Pardoning mercy, forgavest mine iniquity. So in *Mal. 3. 16. And there was a Book of Remembrance written, for them that fear the Lord, and that thought upon his Name.* They had but some thoughts of God, and God reflects upon those thoughts with an eye of love. *Isa. 38. 5. I have heard thy prayers, I have seen thy tears.* Tears we look upon but as poor things, and yet God looks upon them as Pearls, and therefore he puts them into his Bottle, as the Psalmist speaks. There is not a bit of bread, nor a drop of drink thou givest, but God casts an eye of love upon it, *Mat. 25. 35, 36.*

So in *Psa. 68.*
One observes
that there are
two strong
things in
tears. *1 Deor-
sumfluunt, &
calum petunt.*
They drop
downward,
and fall to the
Earth, yet
they reach
upwards, and

There is not a desire that arises in thy soul, but the Lord takes notice of it. *Prov. 10. 17. Thou hast heard the desire of the humble.* Weak Saints are full of desires, their whole life is a life of desires, they are still a breathing out holy desires: Lord pardon such a sin, and give me power against such a sin, and strength Lord to withstand such a temptation, and grace Lord to uphold me under such an affliction, &c.

and

and the Lord hears and answers such gracious breathings and longings.

It was holy *Jewels* desire, That he might dye preaching, and God lookt with an eye of love upon his desire, and he had it.

It was *Latimers* desire, That he might shed his heart blood for Christ, and God lookt with an eye of love upon the breathings of his heart, and he had it.

The *Israelites* did but groan, and God lookt upon their groans with an eye of love, he comes down, he makes his arm bare, he tramples upon their Proud Enemies, and by Miracles he saves them. O weak Christian! is not this a singular comfort, that the Lord reflects with an eye of love upon your thoughts, upon your desires, upon your tears, and upon your groanings? &c. What though others slight you? what though others take no notice of you? yet the Lord casts an eye of love upon you.

Some think its very strange that God should set down in Scripture, the story of *Jacob*, a poor Countrey-man, *Gen. 31.* that he had a few Ewes and Lambs, streaked and spotted, & yet take no notice of the great Emperours and Kings of the Earth, nor of their great actions, and warlike designs in the world. But this is to shew that tender love and respect that God bears to his children, above what he does to the great ones of this world. God is more taken with *Lazarus* patchy Coat, then with *Dives* silken Robe, &c.

A third thing that I shall Propound for the support and comfort of weak Saints, is this.

Consider, the Lord looks more upon your graces, then he doth upon your weaknesses.

Or thus,

- The Lord will not cast away weak Saints, by reason of the weaknesses that cleaves to their persons, or services.

In *2 Chron. 30. 18, 19, 20.* there came a multitude of people to eat the Passcover, but they were not prepared according to the preparation of the Sanctuary, therefore *Hezekiah* puts up a Prayer for them; and the Text saith, that the Lord hearkened to *Hezekiah*, and healed the people. The Lord
lookt

pierce the
Heavens.
2 *Mus. sunt*
& loquuntur.
They hold
their peace,
yet cry very
loud.

Support 3.

look't upon their uprightnes, & so past over all their other weakneses. He did not cast off *Peter* for his horrid sins, but rather looks upon him with an eye of love and pity. *Mark* 16. 7. *But go your way, tell his Disciples and Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee, there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.* O admirable love! O matchlesse mercy! where sin abounds, grace do's super-abound. This is the glory of Christ, that he carries it sweetly towards his people, when they carry themselves unworthily towards him. Christ looks more upon *Peters* sorrow, then upon his sin; upon his tears, then upon his Oaths, &c. The Lord will not cast away weak Saints for their great unbelief, because there is a little faith in them. He will not throw them away for that hypocrisie that's in them, because of that (little) sincerity that's in them. He will not cast away weak Saints for that Pride that's in them, because of those Rays of humility that shine in them. He will not despise his People for their Passions, because of those grains of meeknesse that are in them. We will not throw away a little gold because of a great deal of dross that cleaves to it; nor a little wheat, because mixt with much chaffe; and will God? will God?

We wil not cast away our garments because of some spots, nor our books, because of some blots, nor our jewels, because of some flaws, & do we think that the Lord will cast away his dearest ones, because of their spots and blots, and flaws? surely no. God looks more upon the bright side of the cloud, then the dark. *James* 5. 11. *Remember the patience of Job.* 'Tis not, Remember the murmuring of *Job*, the cursing of *Job*, the complainings of *Job*, the impatience of *Job*; but, Remember the patience of *Job*. God looks upon the Pearl, and not upon the spot that is in it. So in *Heb.* 11. 30, 31. there's mention made of *Rahabs* faith, love, and peaceable behaviour towards the Spies, but no mention made of her lie. The Lord overlooks her weaknes, and keeps his eye upon her virtues. Where God sees but a little grace, he doth as it were hide his eyes from those circumstances that might seem to deface the glory of it. So in *1 Pet.* 3. 6. *Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord.* Mark there was but one good word

word in *Sarahs* speech to *Abraham*, she call'd her Husband Lord, the speech otherwise was a speech of unbelief; yet the Holy Ghost speaking of her in reference to that speech, conceals all the evil in it, and mentions only the reverent Title she gave to her Husband, commending her for it.

He that drew *Alexander*, whilst he had a scar upon his face, drew him with his finger upon the scar. So when the Lord comes to look upon a poor soul, he lays his finger upon the scar, upon the infirmity, that he may see nothing but grace, which is the beauty and the glory of the soul. Ah but weak Christians are more apt to look upon their infirmities, then on their graces; & because their little gold is mixt with a great deal of dross, they are ready to throw away all as dross. Well, remember this, the Lord Jesus hath as great, & as large an interest in the weakest Saints, as he hath in the strongest. He hath the interest of a Friend, and the interest of a Father, the interest of a head, & the interest of a husband: and therefore though Saints be weak, yea, though they be very weak, yet having as great, and as large an interest in them, as in the strongest Saints, he can't but overlook their weaknesse, and keep a fixed eye upon their graces.

A fourth Support is this.

That the Lord will graciously Preserve, and strengthen these weak graces that are in you.

Though your graces be as a spark of fire in the midst of an Ocean of corruption, yet the Lord will preserve & blow up that spark of fire into a flame. It was the Priests office in the time of the law, to keep the fire in the Sanctuary from going out; and it is the Office of our Lord Jesus, as he is our High Priest, our Head, our Husband, our Mediator, for to blow up that heavenly fire that he hath kindled in any of our souls. His honour, his faithfulness, and his goodness is engaged in it, and therefore he cannot but do it; else he would loose much love, & many Prayers & Praises, did he not cherish, Preserve, and strengthen his own work in his own People. The faith of the Disciples was generally weak, as I have formerly shew'd you, & yet how sweetly doth the Lord Jesus carry it towards them? He was stil a breathing out light, life and

Support 4.

The tallest Oak was once an Acorn, & the deepest Doctor was once in his Horn-book.

John 16.
Acts 2.

Iſa. 60. 12.

Zech. 12. 8.

and love upon them, he was still a turning their water into wine, their bitter into sweet, and their discouragements into encouragements, and all to raise and keep up their spirits. His heart was much in this thing, therefore sayes he, *I is necessary that I leave you, that I may send the comforter, to be a comfort & guide unto you.* I will pour out my spirit upon you, that a little one may become a thousand, and a small one a strong Nation, and that the feeble may be as David, and the house of David as God, as the Angel of the Lord. That's a sweet Text, *Iſa. 65. 8. 7 thus saith the Lord, as the new wine is found in the clusters, and one saith destroy it not, for a blessing is in it, so will I do for my servants sake, &c.* Oh! saith Christ (to the father) here are a company of weak Saints, that have some buddings of grace, O do not destroy it, father! there is a blessing in it, though it be but weak. The Genuine sence of the similitude I think is this, when a Vine being blasted or otherwise decayed, is grown so bad, and so barren, that scarce any good clusters of Grapes can be discerned on it, whereby it may be deemed to have any life, or of ever becoming fruitful again, and the Husband-man is about to grub it up, or cut it down to the ground: One standing by, sees here a cluster, and there a little cluster, and cries out, O don't grub up the Vine, don't cut down the Vine, it hath a little life, and by good husbandry it may be made fruitful. We may look upon the Lord Jesus as thus pleading with his fathers Justice, Father I know thou seest that these souls are dry, and barren, and that there is little or no good in them, and therefore thou mightest justly cut them down: But Oh my father! Nee here a bunch, and there a bunch; here a little grace, and there a little grace, surely there is a blessing in it, O spare it, let it not be stub'd up, let it not be destroyed.

Zech. 1. 11.
Bring forth.
It is the custom of all Writers, and very frequent in the sacred Dia-lect, to use phrases whereby they understand much more than they

Mat. 12. 27. A bruised Reed shall he not break, nor smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgement unto victory.

A bruised Reed shall he not break. The Jewish Commentators carry it thus, He shall not Tyrannize over, but nourish and cherish the poor, weak, feeble ones, that are wont to be oppressed by great ones. But men more spiritual carry it thus,
Christ

Christ will not carry it roughly & rigorously towards poor weak tender souls, whose graces are as a bruised Reed, & as smoking flax. A Reed is a contemptible thing, a tender thing it will break sometimes before a man is aware, a bruised Reed is more tender, it will be broken with a touch; yet Christ will not break such a bruised Reed, i. e. a soul weak in grace.

Not quench the smoking flax. The wick of a Candle is little worth, and yet less when it smoaks, as yielding neither light nor heat, but rather smoaks and offends with an ill smell, which men cannot bear, but will tread it out. But the Lord Jesus Christ will not do so. Souls whose knowledge, love, faith and zeal, do's but smoak out, the Lord Jesus will not trample under-foot, nay; he will cherish, nourish, and strengthen such to life Eternal. Look what Tallow is to the wick, or Oyl is to the Lamp, that will the Lord Jesus be to the graces of weak Christians.

Till he shall bring forth judgement unto Victory. That is, untill the sanctified frame of grace begun in their hearts, be brought to that perfection that it prevaieth over all opposite corruption. Thus you see how sweetly the Lord Jesus carries it to souls weak in grace. Therefore let not those that bring forth a hundred fold, despise those that bring forth but thirty; nor those that have five Talents, despise those that have but two.

The fifth Support is this.

That weak Saints may be very useful to the strong, and sometimes may do more then strong Saints can.

As you may see in 1 Cor. 12. 14. to 28. The Apostle in this Scripture discovers the singular use of the weakest Saint in the body of Christ, by the usefulness of the weakest & meanest Member in the natural body, to the strongest. V. 21. *The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the foot, I have no need of thee.* By the head, & by the eye he means such Saints as were eminent in gifts & graces, that were adorn'd more richly, & that shin'd more gloriously in grace & gracious abilities, then others. Oh these should not despise those that were not so eminent & excellent as themselves;

doe express, an example whereof you have in this verse; where Christs not breaking the bruised reed, signifies his great mercy and kindness in repairing, and restoring, and curing the bruised weakling. And so his not quenching the smoking flax, is his enlightning quickning & enflaming that fire or spark of grace or goodnesse which was almost quencht, &c. Sup; or 5. Others understand the words of Christ, setting up the profession of the Gospel in the world, among the Heathens, if the Jewes will not receive it.

It was a saying of General Vere to the King of Denmark, That Kings cared not for Souldiers, untill such time that their Crowns hung on the one side of their heads.

Socrates Ecclesi. Histo.

A little Star hath light, & influence, tho not the glory which is proper to the Sun.

Support 6.

selves; for God hath so tempered the inequality of the members in the natural body, that the more excellent and beautifull members, can in no wise lack the more abject & weak members; therefore slight not the weakest Saints, for certainly at first or last the weakest will be servicable to the strongest. A Dwarf may be usefull to a Gyant, a child to a man; sometimes a little finger shall do that that a limb in the body can't do. Tis so often in Christs spiritual body. I will give you a very famous instance for this.

At the council of Nice there was 318 Bishops, and by the subtilty of a Philosopher, disputing against the Marriage of Ministers, they generally Voted against it, that those that were single, should not marry: At length up starts Paphrius, a plain Christian, and in the name of Christ, with the naked word of God, he pleaded against them all in that case; & God so wrought by his Arguments, that he convinc't the 318 Bishops, and carried the cause against them; yea, & so convinc't the Philosopher of his error, that before all he freely confest it. *As long (saith he) as mens words were only pressed, I could repell words, with words; but what is weak man to withstand the word of God? I yield I am conquer'd.*

Weak Christians may be of singular use to the strongest; those that know most may learn more, even from the weakest Saints.

Junius was converted, by discoursing with a Plow-man. And, Acts 18. 24 to 27. Apollo, though he was an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures (as the Text speaks) yet was he furthered and bettered in the knowledge of Christs Kingdome, by Aquilla, and Priscilla; a poor Tent-maker and his wife, were instrumentall to acquaint him with those things that he knew but weakly. He had not ascended above John's Baptism, but they had, and so communicated their light and knowledge to him.

The sixth Support is this.

Where there is but a little grace, here God expects lesse, and will accept of lesse, though it be accompanied with many failings.

Thou sayest, Oh! I have but a little grace, a little faith, a little love, a little zeal. Oh know, where there is but a little

grace,

grace, there God expects lesse obedience, and will accept of lesse service. 2 Cor. 8. 12. *For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that which a man hath, and not according to that which he hath not.* The two Mites cast into the Treasury (Luke 21. 3.) by the poor Widow, her heart being in the action, were more acceptable then two Talents cast in by others. Noah's Sacrifice could not be great, and yet it was greatly accepted by God. In the time of the Law God accepted a handful of Meal for a Sacrifice, and a gripe of Goats hair for an Oblation; and certainly God hath lost none of his affections to poor souls, in the time of the Gospel. Cant. 2. 14. *Let me hear thy voice, for thy voice is sweet, and thy countenance is lovely.* The Hebrew word* signifies any sound, such as Birds or bruits make; their chattering is like lovely Songs in the ear of God; their mite is a sweet Oblation. Parents that have but some drops of that love and tender affection that is in God to his people, yet accept of a very little service from their weak children, and will not God? In time of strength God looks for much, but in the time of weaknes God will bear much, and overlook much, and accept of a little, yea, of a very little.

One writing of the Tree of Knowledg, saith, *That it bears many leaves, but little fruit.* Though weak Saints have a great many leaves, and but little fruit, little grace, yet that little the Lord will kindly accept of.

Artaxerxes the Persian Monarch was famous for accepting of a little war: from the hand of a loving Subject. God makes himself famous, and his grace glorious, by his kind acceptance of the weakest endeavours of his People, &c.

The Seventh Support is this.

The least measure of grace is as true an earnest, and as good and sure a Pledge of greater measures of grace that the soul shall have here, and of glory that the soul shall have hereafter, as the greatest measure of grace is.

He that hath begun a good work, he will perfect it to the day of Christ. Christ is called not only the Author, but also the Finisher of our faith, Heb. 12. 2. In Mal. 4. 2, 3. *Unto you that fear my Name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise, with healing*

It is very observable, that the Eagle and the Lyon, those brave Creatures, were not offered in Sacrifice unto God, but the poor Lamb and Dove: To note, that your brave, high & lofty spirits God regards not; but your poor, meek, contemptible spirits God accepts.

* *Ethkelech.*

Support 7. Though men often loose their earnest, yet God will never loose his. His earnest is very obliging. Phil. 1. 6.

The Hebrew word **וַיֵּצֵא** or way, signifies a distinct course from others, as the way from one Town differs from the way to another. Here in Job 'tis taken for a course in plenty.

וְהָיָה
From Hagman
Green.

Isa. 58, 11.

Support. 8.
A dying Saint
once cryed
out, He is
come, he is
come (mean-
ing the Lord)
with a great
reward for a
little work.

healing in his wings, and he shall goe forth and grow up as Calves of the stall. And so in Job 17. 9. The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger. Zech. 12. 8. In that day shall the Lord defend the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David, and the house of David shall be as God, as the Angel of the Lord before them. So in Hos. 14. 5, 6, 7. I will be as the dew to Israel, he shall grow as the Lilly, and cast forth his fruits as Lebanon: His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the Olive Tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow, shall return, they shall revive as the Corn, and grow as the Vine, the cent thereof shall be as the Wine of Lebanon.

The Tree in Alcinous Garden, had alwayes blossoms, buds, and ripe fruits, one under another. Such a Tree will God make every Christian to be. The righteous (though never so weak) shall flourish like the Palm Tree, Psal. 92. 12, 13, 14. Now the Palm Tree never loseth his leaf or fruit, saith Pliny.

An old man being asked, If he grew in goodness, answered, Yea doubtlesse I believe I do, because the Lord hath said, They shall still bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat, and flourishing, or Green, as the Hebrew hath it.

In the Island of St. Thomas (on the back side of Africa) in the midst of it is a Hill, and over that a continual cloud, wherewith the whole Island is water'd. Such a cloud is Christ to weak Saints. Though our hearts naturally are like the Isle of Paphmos, which is so barren of any good, as that nothing will grow, but on Earth that is brought from other Places: yet Christ will make them like a watered Garden, and like a Spring of water, whose waters fail not.

The Eighth Support is this.

That the least good that is done by the weakest Saint, shall not be despised by Christ, but highly esteemed and rewarded.

As you may see in Mat. 19. 27. Behold we have forsaken all, and followed thee, and what shall we have? A great All, a great catch indeed, as I have formerly shew'd you; they left a few old Boats, and torn Nets, and poor hous- hold

hold-stuffe, yet Christ carries it very sweetly and lovingly to them, and tels them in *Ver. 28.* that they should sit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel. Christ tels them they shall sit as Ambassadors, or chief Councello: s, and Presidents, which have the chief seats in the Kingly Assembly, yea they shall sit as Kings; they are here but obscure Kings, but Kings Elected, but in that day they shall be Kings crowned, Kings glorified, Kings acknowledged; then they shall as far out-shine the glory of the Sun, as the Sun now out-shines a twinkling Star. In that day they shall be higher then the Kings of the Earth. So in *Mat. 10. ult.* And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a Disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward, for a cup of cold water. Water the common element, and cold water, which cost them not so much as fire to warm it, for that there is a torrent, and a very sea of all pleasures provided for thee to all Eternity. God esteems mens deeds by their minds, and not their minds by their deeds, The least and cheapest courtesie that can be shewed, shall be rewarded. There is an Emphasis in that deep Affirmation, *Verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.* Mercy is as sure a grain as vanity. God is not like to be eak, neither will he forget the least good done by the least Saint. The Butler may forget *Joseph*, and *Joseph* may forget his fathers house, but the Lord will not forget the least good done by the weakest Saint.

The Duke of *Burgundy*, being a wise and loving man, did bountifully reward a poor Gardener, for offering of him a Rape Root, being the best Present the poor man had: And will not our God, whose very nature is goodness, kindnesse, and sweetnesse, &c. doe much more? surely he will reward the least good done by the weakest Saint. Therefore be not discouraged, weak Christians, though you should meet with hard measure from the World; though they should reward your weak services with reproaches, &c. for the Lord will reward you, he will not despise the day of small things. What though (O precious soul) thy language be elipt and broken?

Psal. 89. 27.
Agrippa having suffered imprisonment for wishing *Cajus* Emperour, the first thing *Cajus* did when he came to the Empire, was to prefer *Agrippa* to a Kingdome. He gave him also a Chain of Cold as heavy as the Chain of Iron that was upon him in prison. And will not Christ richly reward for all our well wishes to ward him? & for all our gracious actions for him? Surely he will. He has a Kings heart; as well as a Kings Purse. *Heb. 6. 10.*

ken? what though thou canst but chatter like a Crane? what though thou canst not talk so fluently and eloquently for Christ, as others? what though thy hand be weak, that thou canst not do so much for Christ, as others? nor do so well for Christ, as others? yet the Lord seeing thy heart sincere, will reward thee. Thou shalt have an everlasting rest for a little labour, and a great reward for a little work.

The ninth Support is this.

That as your graces are weaker then others, so your temptations shall be fewer, and your afflictions lighter then others.

God in much wisdom and love will sure your burdens to your backs, he will sure all your temptations and afflictions to your strength, your burdens shall not be great, if your strength be but little, as you may see 1 Cor. 10. 13. *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* The Lord, Oh weak Christian! will sure thy burden to thy back, and his strokes to thy strength. This is most evident in Scripture, that the strongest in grace have alwayes been most tempted, afflicted and distressed.

If *Abraham* excell others in Faith, God will try the strength of *Abrahams* faith to the uttermost, and put him to that that he never put man to before. If *Moses* excel all others in meeknesse, the Lord will try the strength of that grace, and *Moses* shall have to do with as proud and as murmuring a Generation, as ever man had to do with. If *Job* carry the day from all others, in point of patience, he shall be exercised with such strange and unheard of afflictions, as shall try not only the truth, but also the strength of his patience to the uttermost. If *Paul* have more glorious Revelations then the rest of the Apostles, *Paul* shall be more buffeted and exercised with temptations, then the rest of the Apostles.

And thus you see it clear by all these instances, That the best and choicest Saints have alwayes met with the worst and greatest temptations and afflictions. So when the Disciples

Support 9.

When *Lazarus* was at the stake, ready to be burned, he breathed out those sweet words, *Fidelis est Dominus, &c.* God is faithful, &c.

Acts & Mon.
Job. 1579.

Gen. 22.

Num. 12. 3.
Exo. 16. 7. 8.
Num. 14. 27. 36.
Chap. 16. 11.
Exod. 15. 24.
James 5. 11.
Read the 1. 6. & 7. Chapters of Job.
2 Cor. 12. 1. to 11.

ciples were in the low strait, when they were weak in grace, the Lord Jesus exercises them but with light afflictions, but when they had a greater measure of the Spirit pour'd upon them, then their troubles were increased and multiplied, and their former troubles, in comparison of the latter, were but as scratches of pins, to stabs at the heart. When the Spirit of the Lord was poured out upon them, then they were afflicted, opposed and persecuted, with a witness. When they had a greater measure of the Spirit, to enable them to bear the hatred, frowns, strokes and blows of the enraged world, then all of them had the honour to suffer a violent death for Christ, as Histories do evidence.

That's a very remarkable Scripture, *Luke 24. 49. And behold I send the promise of my father upon you, but tarry ye in the City of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.* The Lord Jesus would not have them go from Jerusalem, till they were endued with power from on high. By the Promise of the Father, is meant the gifts and graces of the Spirit, that's promised in *Isa. 44. 3. Joel 2. 28. John 14. 16. & 15. 26. Tarry ye here* (sayes Christ) *at Jerusalem, till ye be completely armed and fitted for all encounters, till ye be endued with power.* Or as the Greek carries it, *Till ye be clothed.* They were as naked persons, they had but a little of the Spirit, so that they were not compleat; they were not clothed with the Spirit, till after the Ascension of Christ. Now saith Christ, *Tarry until such time as ye are clothed with the Spirit.* The Lord Jesus knew well enough, that they should meet with bitter opposition, terrible afflictions, and dreadful persecutions; for his and the Gospel sakes; therefore *Tarry* (saith he) *until ye be clothed with the holy Ghost, that so nothing may daunt ye, nor sink ye.*

The tenth Support is this.

That your persons stand not before God in your own righteousness, but in the perfect, spotlesse, and unblameable righteousness of the Lord Jesus.

Weak hearts are apt to sit down troubled & discouraged, when they look upon that body of sin that is in them, and those imperfections that attend their chiefest services, they are

Acts 2. 1. to 21.

1st John 2. 1.

Support 10.

The costly
Cloak of Al-
cibones,
which Dyoni-
sius sold to
the Carthagi-
nians, for an
hundred Ta-
lents, was a
mean & beg-
garly rag to
that embroy-
dered Mantle
that Christ
does put up-
on the wea-
kest Saints.

are ready to say, we shall one day perish by the strength of our lusts, or by the defects of our services. O but weak souls should remember this to strengthen them against all discouragements that their persons stand before God, cloathed with the righteousness of their Saviour, and so God owns them, & looks upon them as persons wrapt up in his Royal Robe. Hence 'tis that he is called, *Jer. 23. 6. Jehovah Tsidkenu, The Lord our righteousness.* And so in *1 Cor. 1. 30. He is of God made unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.*

Though weak Saints have nothing of their own, yet in Christ they have all, for in him is all fulness, *Col. 1. 19.* both repletive and diffusive; both of abundance, and of redundancy; both of plenty, and of bounty. He is made to weak Saints Wisdom, by his Prophetical Office; and he is made to weak Saints, Righteousness and Sanctification, by his Priestly Office; and he is made to weak Saints, Redemption, by his Kingly Office. So in *Col. 2. 10. And ye are compleat in him, which is the head of all principallity and power.*

Varro reports of 288 several Opinions that were among the Philosophers, about the compleat happiness of man, but they were out in them all, one judging his happiness lay in this, & another in that. They caught at the shadow of happiness, but could not come at the Tree of life, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is weak Saints compleat happiness. *Rev. 14. 5. And in their mouths was found no guile, for they were without fault before the Throne of God.* Though men may accuse you, judge and condemn you, yet know for your support, that you are acquitted before the Throne of God. However you may stand in the eyes of men, as full of nothing but faults, as Persons made up of nothing but sin, yet are you clear in the eyes of God. So in *Cant. 4. 7. Thou art all fair, my Love, and there is no spot in thee.* There's none, such as are the spots of wicked men, nor no spot in mine account. God looks upon weak Saints in the Son of his love, and sees them all lovely; they are as the Tree of Paradise, *Gen. 2. fair to his eye, and pleasant to his taste.* Or as *Abalom*, in whom there was no blemish from head to foot. Ah poor souls! you are
apt

apt to look upon your spots, and blots, and to cry out with the Leaper (not only) *Unclean, unclean, but Undone, undone.* Well, for ever remember this, That your persons stand before God in the righteousness of Christ; upon which account you alwayes appear before the Throne of God, without fault; you are all fair, and there is no spot in you.

The eleventh Support is this.

Your sins shall never provoke Christ, nor prevail with Christ so far, as to give you a Bill of Divorce.

O there is much in it (if the Lord would set it home upon your hearts) your sins shall never prevail so far with Christ, nor never so far provoke him, as to work him to give you a Bill of Divorce. Your sins may provoke Christ to frown upon you, they may provoke Christ to chide with you, they may provoke him greatly to correct you, but they shall never provoke Christ to give you a Bill of Divorce. *Pf. 89. 30, 31, 32, 33, 34. If his Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgements: If they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments: Then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.* That's a great support to a weak Saint. That his sin shall never separate him from God, nor Christ. Thou art many times afraid that this deadnesse, this dulnesse, this earthlinnesse, and these wandring thoughts, &c. that doe attend thee, will provoke the Lord Jesus to sue out a Bill of Divorce against thee. But remember this, Thy sins shall never so far prevail with Christ, as to work him to give thee a Bill of Divorce. Mark.

There's nothing can provoke Christ to give thee a Bill of Divorce, but sin.

Now sin is slain.

Ergo.

I shall open this to you in three things.

First, Sin is slain Judicially, for 'tis condemned both by Christ, and his people, and so 'tis dead according to Law, which is so may be a singular comfort & support to weak Saints, that their greatest and worst Enemy (Sin) is condemn-

Support II.

Read Ier. 3.
Out of the most poysonfull Drugs, God distills his glory, and our salvation. Golden speaks of a Maid, called Nupella, that was not-risled by poyson. God can and will turn the very sins of his people, which are the worst poyson in all the world, into his Childrens advantage.

Vide Grotium,
and Vorstius
on the words.

ned to dye, and shall not for ever vex & torment their precious souls. 'Tis dead judicially, 'tis under the sentence of condemnation, 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, &c. The Apostle here triumphs over it as a Thief condemned to death. Sin is sentenc'd now, though not fully put to death, its dead judicially. As when the sentence of death is past upon a Malefactor, you say he is a dead man, why he is judicially dead: so is sin, sin is judicially dead. When a man that hath robbed and wounded another, is taken, and sentenc'd judicially, we say he is a dead man; and it's often a great refreshing and satisfaction to a man, that he is so. Sin, O weak soul 'tis sentenc'd and judicially slain; and therefore that can never work the Lord Jesus to give thee a Bill of Divorce. The thoughts of which should much refresh thee, and support thee.

Rom. 6. 14.

'Tis with sin
in the Saints,
as 'twas with
those Beasts,
Dan. 7. 12.
who had
their Dominions
taken
away, though
their lives
were prolonged
for a season,
and a time.

Secondly, Sin is dead or slain civilly, as well as judicially. 'Tis civilly dead, because the power of it is much abated, & its Dominion and Tyranny over-powred; as when a King or Tyrant is whipt and stript of all power to domineer, reign, and play the Tyrant, is civilly dead, even while he lives; so is sin in this sense dead even while it lives. That Text is suitable to our purpose, Hos. 13. 1. *When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he dyed.*

What's the meaning of these words? The meaning is this. When the King of Ephraim spake, the people even trembled at his voice, such power once he had: But when he offended in Baal, by serving Baal, by giving himself up to Idolatry, he died in respect of obedience, not yielded to him as formerly. Time was that he was terrible, but when he fell to Idolatry, his strength and glory came down, so that now he became even like a dead carcase.

Adam dyed civilly, the same day that he sinned. The creatures that before lovingly obeyed him, as soon as he renounc'd obedience to his God, they renounc'd all obedience to him, or his Sovereignty, so that he civilly dyed the very same day that he sinned.

That's

That's a sweet word that you have, *Rom. 6. 11. Likewise reckon ye also your selves to be dead indeed unto sin.* Therefore Christ will never Divorce you for sin. O what a support may this be to a weak Saint, that sin that he fears above all other things in the world, is slain judicially and civilly; the Lord hath whipt & stript it of all its ruling, reigning, domineering, tyrannizing power. O therefore Christians, look upon sin as dead (that is) as not to be obeyed, as not to be acknowledged, no more then a Tyrant that's stript of all his tyrannizing power. People that are wise, and understand their liberty, look not upon such a one as fit to be obeyed and served, but as one fit to be renounced & destroyed. Do you so look upon your sins, & deal accordingly with them.

Thirdly, Sin is slain naturally, as well as civilly. Christ hath given it its death's wound, by his death & resurrection. He hath given sin such a wound, that it cannot be longliv'd though it may linger a while in a Saint. (As a tree that's cut at the root with a fore gasch or two, must dye within a year, perhaps a month, nay, it may be within a week, though for a time it may flourish, it may have leaves & fruit, yet it secretly dies, and will very shortly wither and perish.) The Lord Jesus hath given sin such a mortal wound, by his death and Spirit, and by the communication of his favour & grace to the soul, that sin shall never recover its strength more, but dye a lingering death in the souls of the Saints. Christ did not dye all at once upon the Crosse, but by little and little. To shew us that his death should extend to the slaying of sin gradually, in the souls of the Saints. When our Enemy hath a mortal wound, we say, He is a dead man; his wound is mortal; so when Jesus Christ hath given sin such a deadly wound, such a mortal blow, that it shall never recover its strength and power more; we may truly say, 'tis dead, 'tis slain. Therefore cheer up, O weak souls, for certainly sin that is thus slain, can never provoke Jesus Christ to give you a Bil of Divorce. Ah that all weak Christians would (like the *Bee*) abide upon these sweet Flowers, and gather Honey out of them; &c.

To proceed.

Where sin sits
in the soul, as
a King sits up-
on his throne,
and commands
the heart, as a
King commands
his subjects, there
is reign of sin:
But grace frees
the soul from this.

Support 12.

The notion of *συμμετοχῆς* *Communionis* best expressed by *Chrysostom*, in these words, When mankind fled far from Christ, Christ pursued & caught hold of it, and this he did by fastening on our nature in his incarnation, &c. The Ancients use to say (commonly) That Alexander and Epheftion had but one soul in two distinct bodies, because their joy and sorrow, glory and disgrace, was mutual to them both. 'Tis so between Christ & his Saints. Their names that are written in red letters of blood in the Churches Kalender, are written in golden letters in Christs Register, in

The twelfth Support is this.

Christ and you are sharers.

Know this weak Saints, for your support and comfort, That Christ shares with you, and you share with Christ.

I shall open this sweet Truth to you a little.

1. Christ shares with you in your Natures.

In *Heb. 2. 16.* For verily he took not on him the Nature of Angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. And by this he hath advanced fallen man above the very Angels. This is the great mystery spoken of, *1 Tim. 3. 16.* And without controversy, the great is the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh, &c.

2. The Lord Jesus shares with you in your afflictions.

In *Isa. 63. 9.* In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them. In his love, and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old. It is between Christ and his Church, as between two Lute-strings, no sooner one is struck, but the other trembles.

3. He shares with you in all sufferings and persecutions, as well as in all your afflictions.

Acts 9. 4, 5. Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? There is such a near union between the Lord Jesus Christ, and the weak Saints, that a man cannot strike a Saint, but he must strike through the very heart of Christ. Their sufferings are held his, *Col. 1. 24.* and their afflictions are his afflictions, and their reproaches are his reproaches, *Heb. 13. 13.* and their provocations are his provocations, *Nehem. 4. 4, 5.* God is provoked more then *Nehemiah*. So *Isa. 8. 18.* compared with *Heb. 2. 13.* Behold I, and the Children, whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and wonders in Israel. This the Apostle applies to Christ, *Heb. 2. 13.*

4. The Lord Jesus Christ shares with you in all your temptations, *Heb. 2. 17, 18.* Chap. 4. 15, 16.

Christ was tempted, and he was afflicted as well as you, that he might be able to succour you that are tempted. As a poor man that hath been troubled with pain and grief, he will share with others that are troubled with pain or grief.

Ah

As friends the Lord Jesus Christ hath lost none of his affections, by going to Heaven, he is still full of compassion, though free from personal passion. When he was on earth Oh how did he sympathize with his poor servants in all their temptations, *Satan* (sayes Christ to *Peter*) *hath desired to winnow thee but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.* *Luther* in his Preaching met with every mans temptation, and being once askt how he could do so answered, Mine own manifold temptations and experiences are the cause thereof. Oh the manifold temptations that the Lord Jesus hath undergone, makes him sensible (as I may say) and willing to share with us in our temptations.

Secondly, As Christ shares with weak Saints, so weak Saints share with Christ. And this I shall shew you briefly in a few particulars.

1 Weak Saints share with Christ in his Divine Nature. *2 Pet. 1. 4. Whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these we might be partakers of the Divine Nature.* Nor of the substance of the God-head, as the *Fancifull* say, for that is incommunicable: But by the Divine Nature, we are to understand those Divine Qualities, called elsewhere, *The Image of God, The Life of God,* that whereby we are made like to God in wisdom and holiness, wherein the Image of God, after which man was at first created, consists, *Ephes. 4. 24. Col. 3. 10.* Saints that do partake of this Divine Nature, that is, of those Divine Qualities before spoken of, they resemble God, not onely as a Picture doth a man, in outward lineaments, but as a child doth his father, in countenance and condition: And well may grace be called, *The Divine Nature,* for as God bringeth light out of darkness, comfort out of sorrow, riches out of poverty, and glory out of shame, so does grace bring day out of night, & sweet out of bitter, and plenty out of poverty, and glory out of shame. It turns counters into gold, Pebbles into Pearls, sickness into health, weakness into strength, and wants into abundance. *Enjoying nothing, and yet possessing all things, 2 Cor. 6. 10, &c.*

2 Weak Saints share with Christ in his Spirit and Grace.

In

the Book of Life, said *Prudentius.* In my lifetime (said a gracious soul) I have been assaulted with temptations from Satan, and he hath cast my sins into my teeth, to drive me to despair, yet the Lord gave me strength to overcome all his temptations.

To be made partakers of the Divine nature. Notes two things. 1 Fellowship with God in his holiness. 2 A fellowship with God in his blessedness.

*Omne bonum in
summo bonum.
All good is in
the chiefest
good.*

In *Psal. 45. 7.* Christ is anointed with the Oyle of gladnesse above his fellows. They have the Anointings of the Spirit, as well as he, though not so richly as he. They have their measure, though not that measure & proportion of the Spirit, as the Lord Jesus hath. So in *John 1. 16.* Of his fullnesse have all we received Grace for Grace. There is in Christ not only a fullnesse of Abundance, but also a fullnesse of Redundance. There is an overflowing fullnesse in Christ, as a Fountain overflows, and yet still remains full. Grace for Grace, or Grace upon Grace. Abundance of grace, and the increase of graces one by another.

Grace for Grace. That is, as a child in generation receives member, for member: Or as the Paper from the Presse, receives letter for letter: Or as the Wax from the Seal, receives Print for Print: Or as the Glass from the Image, receives face for face: So does the weakest Saint receive from Jesus Christ.

Grace for Grace. That is, for every grace that is in Christ, there is the same grace in us, in some measure. There is not the weakest Saint that breathes, but ha's in him some wisdom that answers to the wisdom of Christ; and some love that answers to the love of Christ; and some humility, meeknesse, and faith, that answers to the humility, meeknesse, and faith, of the Lord Jesus, in truth and reality, though not in degree or quantity, &c.

3 Weak Saints share with Christ, in the manifestations and discoveries of his Father.

*Plutarch's
reasoning is
good. (Taton
philopanta
kina Friends
have all
things in com-
mon. But God
is our friend.
Ergo.
This was a
rare speech
from a Mea-
then.*

The Lord Jesus that lies in the bosome of the Father, hath the clearest and the fullest manifestations of the Father, that can be, and he comes and opens the love and heart of the Father, he unbosoms and unbowels God to the weakest Saints, as in *John 15. 15.* Henceforth I call you not Servants, for the Servants knoweth not what his Lord doth; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my father, I have made known unto you. So in *John 17. 6, 7, 8.*

4 Weak Saints share with Christ in his Honourable Titles.

In the Title of *Sons*, in *John 3. 12.* Behold what manner of love

love the father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the *Sons of God*! And in that of *Hebrs. Rom. 8. 17.* Yea, they are *Priests, and Prophets, and Kings*, as well as he, as you may see by comparing *Revelations 1. 5, 6.* with *1 Pet. 2. 9.* &c.

5 Weak Saints share with Christ in his conquests.

In *1 Cor. 15. 55, 56, 57. Rom. 8. 37.* Christ hath triumphed over sword, famine, death and Devils, &c. and so have they thorow him also. Over all these we are more then conquerours, we are over and above conquerours. Oh what a blessed thing is this! that weak Saints should share with Christ in his conquests. The poor weak Souldier shares with his General in all his noble and honourable conquests; so does a poor weak Christian share with his Christ in all his noble and honourable conquests.

6 Lastly, They share with Christ in his honour and glory.

And what would they have more? *John 12. 26.* If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my father honour, *1 Pet. 5. 1.* *Ephes. 2. 6.* And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Believers are already risen in Christ their head, and they do at this instant sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Christ as a publick person doth represent all believing souls, and they are set down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, In *Rom. 8. 17.* If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. And in *John 14. 1, 2, 3.* I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto my self, that where I am, there ye may be also. So in *Rev. 3. 21.* To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne. Now what would you have more, weak souls? Christ shares with you, and you share with Christ. You are apt to be discouraged, because you do not share with Christ in such measures of grace, comfort, and holinesse, as such and such strong Saints doe. Oh but remember in how many weighty things Christ and you are sharers, and be dejected if you can. Ah Christians! what though you do not share in the honours,

The wife shares with her husband in all his Titles of honor. So does a Christian with his Christ. See *1 Sam. 18. 17. to 29.* *Col. 2. 14, 15.* *Ephes. 2. 13, 14, 15, 16.* *Heb. 2. 14, 15.* *Rom. 8. 37.* *Imperatorem.* We doe over come.

Christ is the believers harbinger, to prepare for them the best Mansions, &c.

honours, profits, pleasures, and advantages of the world; yet this should be your joy and crown, that Christ and your souls are sharers in those things that are most eminent and excellent, most precious and glorious; and the serious remembrance hereof, should bear up your heads, hopes, and hearts, above all the troubles, temptations, and afflictions that come upon you in this world, &c.

The third thing propounded, was, To shew you the duty of weak Saints. Who these weak Saints are, you have heard, And what their supports and comforts are, you have heard. And now I shall shew you their duty, in the following particulars.

And the first Duty that I shall presse upon weak Saints, is this.

To be thankful for that little grace they have.

Wilt thou be thankful, O Christian! for the least courtesy shewed thee by men? And wilt thou not be thankful for that little measure of grace that is bestowed upon thee by God? Dost thou remember, O weak Christian! that the least measure of grace is more worth then a 1000 worlds? that 'tis more worth then heaven it self? Dost thou remember, O weak Christian! that the greatest number of men have not the least measure or dram of saving grace? Doth free grace knock at thy door, when it passes by the doors of thousands? And doth it cast a Pearl of price into thy bosom, when others are left to wallow in their blood for ever? And wilt thou not be thankful? O do but consider, weak souls! how notoriously wicked you would have been, if the Lord had not bestowed a little grace upon you. Thou lookest, O soul! one way, and there thou hearest some a cursing, banning, and a blaspheming God to his very face. Had not the Lord given thee a little grace, ten thousand to one, but thou hadst been one in wickednes among these Monsters of mankind. And thou lookest another way, and there thou seest persons dicing, carding, drabbing & drunkenning, &c. why had not the Lord vouchsafed to thee some taste and sips of grace, thou mightest have been as vile as the vilest among them. All weak Saints you do not think what an awakened conscience

The Laws of Persia, Macedonia, and Athens, condemned the Ungrateful to death; and certainly unthankfulness may well be styled the Epitome of all Vices.

conscience would give for a little of that little grace that the Lord has given you. Were all the world a lump of gold, and in their hand to give, they would give it for the least spark of grace, for the least drop of mercy.

I have read of a man, who being in a burning Feaver, profess that if he had all the world at his dispose, he would give it all for one draught of beer. So would an awaken'd conscience for one dram of grace. O faith such a soul, when I look up, and see God frowning; when I look inward, and feel conscience gnawing and accusing; when I look downward, and see Hell open to receive me; and when I look on my right & left hand, and see Devils standing ready to accuse me, O had I a thousand worlds, I would give them all for a little drop of that grace that such & such souls have, whom I have formerly slighted and despised. Oh! what would not a damned soul that hath been but an hour in Hell, give for a drop of that grace that thou hast in thy heart? Think seriously of this, and be thankful.

Well, remember one thing more, & that is this, viz. That there is no such way to get much grace, as to be thankful for a little grace. He who opens his mouth wide in praises, shall have his heart filled with graces. Ingratitude stops the ear of God, and shuts the hand of God, and turns away the heart of the God of grace, and therefore you had need be thankful for a little grace. Unthankfulness is the greatest injustice that may be, 'tis a withholding from the great Lord of Heaven and Earth, his due, his debt.

Philip brand'd his Souldier that begged the Land of one that had relieved him, and kindly entertained him, with (*Ingratis hospite*) The Ungrateful Guest. Oh weak Saints! give not God an occasion by your ingratitude to brand you, and to write upon your foreheads, *Ungrateful Children*. Had it not been for unthankfulness, *Adam* had been in Paradise, the *lapsed Angels* in Heaven, and the *Jews* in their own Land of Promise. The *Jews* have a saying, That the world stands upon three things, *The Law, Holy worship, and Reverence*, and if these things fall, the world will fall. You know how to apply it.

One of the Kings of England in his straits, cryed out, A Kingdom for a Horse, a Kingdom for a Christ, a Kingdom for a Christ, or a little grace.

Lycurgus (saith *Musculus*) amongst all his Lawes made none against the Ungrateful; because that was thought a thing so prodigious, as not to be committed by man.

Isa. i. 3, 4.

Gods favours
and mercies
seldome or
never come
single, there
is a series or
concatenati-
on of them,
and every
former draws
on a future.

Ephes. 1. 4.

God and
Christ are the
sole fountain
from whence
all these
streams of li-
ving waters
flow.

Psal. 149. 2.
& 103. 1. to 5.

But that I may in good earnest stir up your souls to thankfulness, will you take home with you these things, that happily have never or seldom been thought of by you.

First, consider, *That there is more need of Praises, then there is of Prayers.*

Two things do with open mouth proclaim this truth.

And the first is this, Our mercies do out-weigh our wants. This is true in temporals, but infinitely more in spirituals, & eternals. Thou wantest this and that outward mercy, & what's thy want, O soul! of this and that single mercy, to the multitudes of mercies that thou dost enjoy? And as for spirituals, there's nothing more clear then this, that thy spirituall mercies doe infinitely out-weigh thy spirituall wants. Thou wantest this and that spirituall mercy, but what are those wants to that God, that Christ, and all those spirituall blessings in heavenly places, with which thou art blest in Christ Jesus.

Secondly, consider this, That all your wants and miseries are deserved and procured by your sins. *Jer. 4. 18. Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee: This is thy wickednesse, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thy heart. And Chap. 50. 25. Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have with-holden good things from you.* But now all your mercies are unmerited, and undeserved, they all flow in upon you from the free love and favour of God; and therefore there's more need of praises, then of Prayers. And Oh! that the high praises of God were more in your mouths; upon this very account! And O that with *David*, you would summon all the faculties of your souls to praise the Lord, who hath freely fill'd you, and followed you with the riches of mercy, all your dayes!

But secondly, consider this, *Thankfulness is a sorer, and a better evidence of our sincerity, and spiritual ingenuity, then praying or hearing, or such like services are.*

Thanksgiving is a self-denying grace, 'tis an uncrowning our selves, and the creatures, to set the Crown upon the head of our Creator; it is the making our selves a foot-stool, that God may be lifted up upon his Throne, and ride

in a holy triumph over all. It is a grace that gives God the supremacy in all our hearts, thoughts, desires, words, and works. Self-love, flesh and blood, and many low and carnal considerations, may carry men to pray, and hear, and talk, &c. The whip may work a shame to begge, but thankfulness is the free-will-Offering of a child. There's nothing that so clearly and so fully speaks out your sincerity and spiritual ingenuity, as thankfulness doth. Therefore weak Saints, if you would have a substantial evidence of your sincerity and spiritual ingenuity, be thankful for a little grace. The little Birds do not sip one drop of water, but they look up, as if they meant to give thanks: To shew us what we should do for every drop of grace, &c.

The third and last consideration to set this home, is this,

A thankful soul holds comfort with the Musick of Heaven.

By thankfulness thou holdest a correspondence with the Angels, who are still a singing *Hallelujahs* to him that sits upon the Throne, and is blessed for ever. In Heaven there is no Prayers, but all Praises. I am apt to think, that there can't be a clearer nor a greater argument of a mans right to Heaven, and ripeness for Heaven, then this, being much in the work of Heaven here on earth. There is no grace but Love, nor no duty but thankfulness, that goes with us to Heaven.

I, but weak Saints may say, Sir, we judg that there is weight in what you say, to provoke us to thankfulness. But did we know that we had true grace, though it were never so little, though it were but as the grain of Mustard-seed, we would be thankful. But this is our condition, we live between fears and hopes; one day hoping we shall to Heaven, and be happy for ever: Another day we are fearing that we shall to Hell, & miscarry for ever. And thus we are up & down, backward & forward. Sometimes we believe we have grace, & at other times we doubt we have none. Sometimes we have a little light, & suddenly our Sun is clouded; one day we are ready to say with *David*, *The Lord is our portion*, and the next day we are ready to complain with *Job*, that

'Tis much to be feard, that that man is Christless and graceless, that is earnest in craving mercies, but slow and dull in returning praises. 'Tis a sign that the Dumb Devil hath possesst such a man.

Rev. 4. 6. to 9.
& 5. 12. to 14.

Epithet
wisthewere
a Nightingale,
to be ever
singing. And
what then
should a Saint
wisth? &c.

we are cast out from the presence of the Lord.

Me-thinks I hear a weak Saint saying thus to me: Sir, I would fain have an end put to this controversy that hath been long in my soul, viz. Whether I have grace or no, and if you please I will tell you what I find, and so humbly desire your judgement and opinion upon the whole.

Well, speak on poor soul, and let me hear what thou hast found in thine own soul.

Why Sir, then thus.

1 I find first, a holy restlesse in my soul, till with old *Simeon*, I have gotten Christ in my arms, yea, till I have gotten Christ in my heart. I go from Duty to Duty, and from Ordinance to Ordinance, and yet I cannot rest, because I cannot find him whom my soul loves. I am like *Noah's Dove*, that could not rest until he had gotten into the Ark. Oh I cannot be quiet till I know that I am housed in Christ. My soul is like a ship in a storm, that is tost hither and thither, Oh! where shall I find him? Oh! how shall I obtain him who is the chiefeft of ten thousand? What *Absalom* said in another case, I can say in this, saith the poor soul in his banishment he could say; *What's all this to me, so long as I can't see the Kings face?* And truly the language of my soul is this, What's honour to me? And riches to me? And the favour of creatures to me? so long as I go mourning without my Christ, so long as I see not my interest in my Christ.

Well, have you any thing else to say, O weak Christian?

Yes Sir, I have one thing more to say.

What's that?

Why, it is this.

2 I can truly say, That the poorest, the most distressed, and afflicted man in the world, is not fuller of desires, nor stronger in his desires, then I am. The poor man desires bread to feed him, & the wounded man desires a plaister to heal him, & the sick man desires Cordials to strengthen him, &c. But these are not fuller of desires after those things that are suable to them, then I am of holy and heavenly desires. Oh that I had more of God! Oh that I were filled with Christ!

Oh

Luke 2. to 25.

33.

The Child is
restlesse, till it
be in the mo-
thers arms.
Cant. 5. 10.

Tota vita boni
Christiani san-
ctum desiderii
est.

Oh that I had his righteousness to cover me! His grace to pardon me! His power to support me! His wisdom to counsel me! His loving-kindness to refresh me! And his happiness to crown me! &c.

Well, is this all, O weak Saint?

No Sir, I have one thing more to tell you.

What's that?

Why, that is this.

3 Though I dare not say that Christ is mine, yet I can truly say, that Christ, his love, his works, his grace, his word are the main objects of my contemplation, and meditation. Oh I am alwayes best, when I am most a meditating and contemplating of Christ, his love, his grace, &c. *Psal. 139: 17. How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them?*

Well, is this all, O weak Saint?

No Sir, I have one thing more to say.

What's that?

Why, it is this.

4 I can truly say, That the want of Christs love is a greater grief and burden to my soul, then the want of any outward thing in this world. I am in a wanting condition, as to temporalls, I want health, and strength, and trading, friends, and money, that *answereth to all things*, as Solomon speaks; and yet all these wants do not so grieve me, and so afflict, and trouble me, as the want of Christ, as the want of grace, as the want of the discoveries of that favour that is better then life.

Well, is this all, O weak Saint?

No Sir, there's one thing more.

What's that?

Why, that is this.

5 That I would not willingly, nor resolvedly sin against Christ, for a world, 'Tis true, I dare not say I have an interest in Christ, yet I dare say that I would not willingly & resolvedly sin against Christ, for a world. I can say, through grace, were I this moment to dye, that my greatest fear is of sinning against Christ, and my greatest care is of pleasing Christ.

Some Contemplations have, *Generationem longam, fructum brevem*; but these are not the contemplations of the Saints.

Eccle. 10. 19.

Psal. 63. 3, 4.

I will rather leap into a bonc-fire, then wilfully to commit wickednesse, wilfully to sin against God.

And I, said
Anselm, had
rather goe to
Hell pure
from sin, then
to Heaven
polluted with
that filth. The
Primitive
Christians
chose rather
to be thrown
to Lyons
without, then
left to lusts
within.

*Ad Leone mag-
nam quam Leono-
nem*, faith
Ternillian.

It is reported
of *Bucer* and
Calvin, That
they loved all
them in whom
they could
espy (*Aliquid
Christi*) any
thing of
Christ. 'Tis
just so with
these poor
hearts that
question their
present con-
dition.

Jer. 9. 12, 3.
Psal. 119. 136.

Christ. I know there was a time, when my greatest care was to please my self and the creature, and my greatest fear was of displeasing the creature. I can remember with sorrow and sadnesse of heart; how often I have displeased Christ, to please my self; and displeased Christ, to please the creature; but now 'tis quite otherwise with me, my greatest care is to please Christ, and my greatest fear is of offending Christ.

Well, is this all, O weak Saint?

No Sir, I have one thing more.

What's that?

Why, that's this.

6 Though I dare not say that Christ is mine, and that I have an interest in him, yet I can truly say, I dearly love the people of Christ, for the Image of Christ that I see stamp't upon them. 'Tis true, I dare not say Christ is mine, and Heaven is mine, I cannot say with such and such, *The Lord is my Portion*; yet I can say that I dearly love those that have the Lord for their portion. I can truly say, that the poorest and the most neglected, and the most despised Saint in the world, is more precious in my eye, and more dear to my soul, then the greatest and the richest sinner in the world, *Psal.* 16. 3.

Well, is this all, O weak Saint, that thou hast to say?

No Sir, I have one thing more.

What's that?

Why, that's this.

7 Though I dare not say that I have an interest in Christ, or that I love Christ, yet I dare say, that my soul weeps and mourns in secret for the dishonour that is done to Christ, both by my self, and by others also. I can look the Lord in the face, were I now to dye, and say, Lord, thou that knowest all thoughts and hearts, thou dost know, that *Mine eyes run down with Rivers of tears, because men keep not thy Law*.

Well, is this all?

No Sir, I crave your patience to hear me in one thing more.

What's that, O weak Christian?

Why,

Why, that is this.

8 That I prize persons & things according to the spiritualness and holiness that is in them; and the more spiritual and holy any man or thing is, the more is that man & thing prized by my soul. I have often thought of that sweet word *1st Cor. 11. 104.* *Thy word is very pure, therefore doth thy servant love it.* Other men love it because of the profit they get by it, or because of a name, or this, or that, but I love it for the purity, for the holiness and the cleanness of it. No Preaching (saith the weak Saint) nor no praying, nor no talking, nor no society that likes me, and is sweet to me, but that that's most spiritual, most holy. It is not an Exercise trick't and trim'd up with wit, learning, and eloquence; 'tis not the hanging of truths ears with counterfeit Pearls, that takes me; but the more plainness, spiritualness, and holiness I see in an Exercise, the more is my heart raised to prize it, and love it. And therefore, saith the weak Saint, because Christ is perfectly & infinitely holy above all other, I prize Christ above all. Ordinances are sweet, but Christ is more sweet to my soul. Saints are precious, but Christ is far more precious. Heaven is glorious, but Christ is infinitely more glorious. The first thing that I would ask, if I might have it, saith the weak Saint, is Christ. And the next thing that I would ask, if I might have it, is more of Christ. And the last thing that I would ask, if I might have it, is that I might be satiated & filled with the fulness of Christ. Let the ambitious man take the honours of the world, so I may but have Christ. Let the voluptuous man swim in all the pleasures of the world, so I may have Christ. And let the covetous man tumble up & down in all the gold & silver of the world, so I may have Christ, and it shall be enough to my soul.

Well, is this all, O weak Saint?

No Sir, I have one thing more to say.

What's that?

Why, it is this.

9 I find the same conflict in my soul, that Paul found in his soul, after he was converted neer upon 14 years, after he

Much in the word is wrapt up in a little, it is more to be admired, then to have *Homers* liads comprized in a Nut-shell. The word is like the stone *Garamasides*, that hath golden drops within it self, enriching of the gracious soul.

None but Christ, none but Christ, said the Martyr.

The best Saints in this world, are like the Tribe of *Manasse*,

half on this side Jordan, in the Land of the Amorites, and half on that side, in the holyland. And tho to be kept from sin, brings most comfort to a poor soul, yet for a poor soul to oppose sin, and God to pardon sin, that brings most glory to God. 2 Cor. 12. 7, 8, 9.

Satan relates of one, who was as circumspect to be seen, as to be. A gracious soul is as careful that he does not indanger another, by a bad life, as he is careful to save his own life.

he was taken up into as clear & choise enjoyments of God, as any soul that ever I read of. The conflict that is mentioned, *Rom. 7*. I find in my soul, the whole frame of my soul, understanding, will and affections, are set against sin: I find that *I have the evil that I do, and I find That the good that I would do, I do not, and the evil that I would not do, that doe I.* I find a Law in my Members, rebelling against the Law of my mind, and leading of me captive to the Law of sin. And this makes me often to cry out with Paul, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?* Therefore I sometime hope, that those sins that are now my burden, shall never hereafter be my bane.

Well, and is this all, O weak Saint?

No Sir, I have one thing more to say.

What's that?

Why, it is this.

10 I can truly say, when the Lord gives me any strength against sin, and any power to serve him, & walk close with him in his ways, it is a greater joy and comfort to my soul, then all the blessings of this life. Though I have not yet seen he hath set me as a seal upon his heart, as a seal upon his arm: Though I have not yet the clear assurance of his love. Though his Spirit hath not yet set up such a light in my soul, whereby I might run and read my right and Title to himself and Heaven, yet when he doth give me but a little light through a crevis, when he does but begin to cause his love to dawn upon me, when he gives me but a little strength against sin, and a little power to walk close with himself, &c. O this doth administer more abiding joy, and more sweet peace, & more solid comfort to my soul, then all the riches, honours, friends and favours of this world.

Well, is this all, O weak Saint?

No Sir, I have one thing more to say,

What's that?

Why, that is this,

11 Though my interest in Christ be not clear to me, yet I can truly say I would not change my condition with the men of this world, for a thousand worlds. 'Tis true, I cannot say that

Psal. 101. 3.
Pl. 119. 21, 22.
Psal. 120. 6.

that I have the seal and witness of the Spirit, that many talk and boast of; (though I fear but a few enjoy) yet I can truly say; that I would not change my estate with men merely civil, nor with the prophane men of this world, for ten thousand worlds, &c.

Well, is this all, O soul?

No Sir, I have but one thing more, & then I have done.

Well, what's that?

Why, that is this.

I find my soul carried forth to a secret resting, relying, leaning, staying, and hanging upon Christ for life and happiness. Though I know not how it shall go with me, yet I have thrown my self into his arms, I lean upon him, there I'll hang, and there I'll rest and stay; *if I must perish, I'll perish there.*

And thus, Sir, I have opened my state and condition to you: And now I do earnestly desire your judgement upon the whole.

Well then, this I shall say, as I must answer it in the day of my appearing before God, That had I as many souls as I have hairs on my head, or as there be stars in Heaven, I could freely adventure the loss of them all, if these things do not undeniably speak out, not only the truth, but also the strength of grace; &c. Nay, let me tel you. That he that finds but any of these things really in his soul (though the Lord hath not given him a clear & full manifestation of his love and favour, &c.) yet while breath is in his body, he hath eminent cause to bless God, and to walk thankfully and humbly before him.

The second Duty is this.

Live up to that little grace you have.

Thou sayest, O weak Christian, thou hast but a little light, a little love, a little zeal, a little faith, &c. well, grant it, but know, that 'tis thy duty to live up to those measures of grace thou hast. And this is the second Head that I shall press upon you; live up, and live out that grace you have. And if ever there were a season to press this point home upon souls, this is the season in which we live. And consider,

P

ring,

To speak well (saith *Isidorus Pelusius*) is to sound like a Cymbal; but to do well, is to act like an Angel, &c.

Iob 13. 15.

2 Kings 7. 3.

4. 5.

Eph. 4. 16.

If Seneca said
of his wife
man, *Major
parte illic est,
unde descendit,*
He is more in
Heaven, then
in Earth: may
not I say this
is much more
true of the
godly, &c.

Of all losses
spirituall
losses are the
saddest and
greatest, and
fetched up
with the
greatest diffi-
culty.

1 Pet. 2. 13.
Ye may put
to silence.
The Greek
word *σιμω*,
signifies to
muzzle, to
halter up, or
button up
their mouths,
as we say. O
there is no-
thing that
will so muzzle
& button up
the mouths

ring, that 'tis not a flood of words, but weight of Argument that carries it with ingenious spirits. I shall therefore propound these following things to their serious consideration

First, consider this, Living up to your graces carries with it the greatest evidence of the truth of grace.

That man that lives not up to his grace (let him be strong or weak) wants one of the best and strongest demonstrations that can be, to evidence the truth of his grace. If you would have a clear evidence that that little love, that little faith, that little zeal you have, is true, then live up to that love, live up to that faith, live up to that zeal that you have, and this will evidence it beyond all contradiction, &c.

Secondly, consider this, God and your own souls will be very great losers, if you live not up to those measures of grace you have.

God will loose many prayers, and many praises, he will loose much honour, and glory, and service, which otherwise he might have; and you will loose much peace, much comfort, much rest, quietnesse, and content, that otherwise your souls might enjoy, &c.

Thirdly, consider this, Your not living up to that little light and grace you have, will open the mouths of graceless souls against your gracious God, and against his gracious ones, and against his gracious ways.

You think because of the weaknesse of your grace, you must be born with in this, & that, & what not? But remember, it is your duty to live up to the light & grace you have, and nothing below this will effectually stop the mouths of graceless wretches from barking against the ways of God, the truths of God, & the people of God. Vain men will be often a reasoning thus, though such & such men & women have not such great knowledge, such clear light, such strong love, & such burning zeal, as David, Paul, & other worthies, yet they have so much light & knowledge as tells them, that they should not carry themselves thus & thus, as they do. Their light and knowledge tells them that they should be just & righteous in their dealings, & in all their ways & designs, &c. Though they have not such great measures of spiri-

spiritual enjoyments, as such and such, yet that little grace they have, should lead them by the hand to do things worthy of that Christ, and the Gospel they profess, &c.

Let me a little expostulate the point with you (weak Saints) you know that you should not be stir'd & heated by every thraw that is in your way, why don't you in this then live up to your light? You know that you should not be overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. And why don't you in this live up to your light? You know that you should do good to those, that do hurt to you, why do not you in this live up to your light? You know that you should do your duties to others, though they neglect their duties to you. 'Tis not the neglect of a husbands duty, that frees the wife from the discharge of hers: Nor the neglect of a wives duty, that frees the husband from the discharge of his. You know this, dont you? Yes, why don't you then live up to your light? Why do you by your contrary actions open the mouths of others against God, and his wayes? You know that you should be exemplary in your relations, in your Generations, and in your conversations. You know that you should be examples of holiness, meekness, sweetness, patience, and contentedness, and why then don't you live up to your knowledge in these things? You know that you should do to others, as you would have others to do to you. And why in this dont you live up to your knowledge? Ah that you that are weak did not cause the mouths of wicked men to be opened against God, his truths, and ways, by your living below that light and knowledge that God hath given you. I beseech you, as you tender the honour of God, and as you would stop the mouths of vain men, live up to those measures of grace that the Lord hath given you. No way to comfort like this, no way to the Crown like this. He will not be long a Babe in grace, who lives out that little grace he hath. Fourthly, Living up to your light is the readiest and the only way to fetch up and to recover all that hath been lost by your living below your light.

By your living below your light, God, your own souls, and the Gospel have lost much, yea, & others also have lost

of vain men as Christians living up to that light and grace they have.

Rom. 12. 21.
Mat. 5. 44. ult.

Bernard paraphrasing on that of Solomon, *A Lilly amongst thorns* faith, The manners (or lines) of men, as Lillies, have their colours and odours: That which comes from a pure heart, and a good conscience, hath the colour of a Lilly if a good name follows, 'tis more truly a Lilly when neither candour nor odour of the Lilly is wanting. *Non enim passim ad Deum sed affectibus curamus.*

Iob 17. 9.
Cant. 6. 10.
Prov. 4. 18.
History reports of a Country in Africa, where the peoples industry hath an abundant reward, for

much light, comfort, strength, and quickness, &c. that they might have had, had you but liv'd up to that little grace you had. Now there is no way on earth to recover, and to fetch up these losses, but by living up to that grace you have. Ah Christians, 'tis not your running from Sermon to Sermon, (not that I speak against frequent hearing of the word) nor your crying up this man, &c. that man, or this notion, and that, or this way, or that, that will recover and fetch up the honor that God hath lost by your living below your graces. 'Tis only your living up to your graces, that will make up all the breaches that have been made upon his honour, &c. the Gospel, &c. upon the comfort & peace of your own souls, and others. Well, remember this, all the honour that God hath from you in this life, is from your living up to that light, knowledge, love, fear, & faith, that he hath given you. There's nothing that will make up all losses, but this; therefore I beg of you, upon the knees of my soul, that you would take this one thing home with you, & go into your Closets, and lay your hands upon your hearts, and say, *Well, the Lord hath lost much, and my own soul hath lost much, and others have lost much by my living below that little grace I have; and therefore I will now make it my business (by assisting grace) to live up to those measures of grace that I have received, more then yet I have done all my dayes. I will by the strength of Christ make it more my duty, and my work to live out what God hath given in, then ever yet I have done, that so the Lord and the Gospel may be no further losers, but gainers by me.*

The fifth and last Motive is this, The readiest and the surest way to get more grace, is to live up to that little grace you have.

He that lives up to a little light, shall have more light; he that lives up to a little knowledge, shall have more knowledge; he that lives up to a little faith, shall have more faith; &c. he that lives up to a little love, shall have more love, &c. There is no such way to attain to greater measures of grace, as for a man to live up to that little grace he hath, verily the main reason why many are such Babes and shrubs in grace, is because they don't live up to their attainments. He that wont improve

improve two talents, but never have the honor to be trusted with five: But he that improves a little, shall be trusted with much. *The diligent hand maketh rich.* He that is active & agile, that works as well as wishes, that adds endeavours to his desires, will quickly be a Cedar in grace. Ah Christians! you have a God that's great, a God that's good, a God that's gracious, & a God that is rich, that loves not to see his children to be alwayes weaklings and striplings in grace. The very Babe, by crawling the Breasts, gets strength and nourishment. O you Babes in grace, put out that little strength you have, be you still a drawing at the Breasts of Christ, at the breasts of the Promises, and strength will come, nourishment will follow, &c.

The third Duty that I would presse upon weak Saints, is this,

Be sure that you alwayes rest upon your graces, and what soever good is in you, with Cautions.

This is a weighty Point, and doth bespeak your most serious attention.

There are six Rules or Cautions that weak Saints should alwayes observe in their looking upon their graces.

And the first is this; *Look upon all your Graces as gifts of grace, as favours given you from above, as gifts dropt out of heaven into your hearts, as flowers that are given you out of the Garden of Paradise.*

A man should never look upon his grace, but he should look upon it as a flower of Paradise, as a gift that God hath cast into his bosome; from Heaven. *1 Cor. 4. 7. Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou hast not received? &c.* Thou talkest of light, of love, of fear, of faith, &c. but what are all these, but Pearls of glory that are freely given thee by the hand of grace? *Every good and perfect gift comes down from above.* The greatest excellencies in us do as much depend upon God, as the light doth upon the Sun. When thou lookest upon thy wisdom, thou must say, Here's wisdom, I, but 'tis from above. Here is some weak love working towards Christ, but 'tis from above. Here's joy, & comfort, and peace; but these are all the flow-

every bushel of seed they sow, they receive 150 increase after. *Blagazin. Plin. l. 18. c. 10.*

The application is easie. *Prov. 10. 4. Dymisus gave him his money again, from whom he had taken much, after that he heard he employed a little well. And will God be worse then a Heathen?*

Of thine own (saith David) have we given thee. 1 Chron. 29. 14.

As all light flows from the Sun, and all water from the Sea, so all good flows from heaven.

ers of Paradise; they never grow in Mans Garden. When a soul looks thus upon all those costly Diamonds with which his heart is deckt, he keeps low, though his graces are high. Where this Rule is neglected, the soul will be endangered of being swelld and putr.

Mr. Fox was used to say, *That as he got much good by his sin, so he got much hurt by his graces.* When you look upon the stream, remember the fountain; when you look upon the flower, remember the root; when you look upon the stars, remember the Sun; and when you look upon your graces, remember the fountain of grace, else Satan will be too hard for you. Satan is so artificial, so subtil & critical, that he can make your very graces to serve him against your graces; conquering joy by joy, sorrow by sorrow, humility by humility, fear by fear, and love by love, if you do not look upon all your graces as streams flowing from the fountain above, and as fruits growing upon the Tree of Life that is in the midst of the Paradise of God. Therefore when one eye is fixt upon your graces, let the other be alwayes fixt upon the God of grace.

Secondly, *At that time when your eye is upon inherent grace and righteousness, let your heart be fixt upon Christ, and his imputed righteousness.*

Pauls eye was upon his grace. *Rom. 7. 22. 25. I delight in the Law of God, after the inward man. And with my mind I serve the Law of God.* And yet at that very same time, his heart was set upon Christ, and taken up with Christ, *Ver. 25. I thank God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* So in *Col. 2. 2, 3.* you have one eye fixt upon grace, and at the same time the heart fixt upon Christ. *That their hearts might be comforted being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.* His eye is upon grace, his heart is upon Christ. So in *Phil. 3. 8.* the Apostle hath his eye upon the excellent knowledge of Christ, but *ver. 9.* his heart is set upon the righteousness of Christ. *That I might be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law,*

Aut totam mecum tene, aut totam omitte.
Greg. Naz.
Let us say of Christ, as the heathen once said of his petty Gods, *(Contemno minus istos Deos modi Jovem proprium habeam)* so long as he had Jupiter to friend, he regarded them not. So, so long as we have our

Let us but thus which is the Love of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. Let us you have his eye upon grace, and his heart upon Christ in the very presence of his grace. This is your glory, Christians, in the presence and sight of all your graces to see the free grace of Christ, and his infinite, spotlesse, matchlesse, and glorious righteousness, to be your surest, sweetest, highest, and choicest comfort and refuge.

Peter was not well skill'd in this lesson, and that was the very reason that he fell foulest, when his confidence was highest: Grace is a Ring of gold, and Christ is the Pearl in that Ring; so he that looks more upon the Ring, then the Pearl that is in it, in the hour of temptation will certainly fall. When the wifes eye is upon her Rings or Jewels, then her heart must be set upon her husband. When grace is in my eye, Christ must at that time be in my arms, yea, he must lye between my breasts, *Cant. 1. 13. My Beloved is as a bundle of Myrrh, he shall lye all night between my breasts.* Christ (and not grace) must lye nearest to a Christians heart.

A third thing is this, *When you look upon your grace, you must look upon it as a beautiful creature, that is begotten in the soul by Christ, and that is strengthened, maintained, cherished, and upheld in your souls by nothing below the spiritual, internal, and glorious operations of Christ.*

Though grace be a beautiful creature, yet grace is but a creature, and so your souls must look upon it. Grace is a heavenly off-spring, 'tis the first-born of God (as I may say) and does most represent him to the life. Grace is a bud of glory, 'tis of the blood Royal, 'tis nobly descended, *James 1. 17.* So in *Heb. 12. 2.* *Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith.* Christ is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginner, and Ender. In all other things and Arts, the same man cannot begin, and finish, but Christ doth both. *Phil. 1. 5.* Our graces thrive, and are upheld in life and power, in beauty and glory, by the internal operation of Christ in our souls. So in *Col. 1. 27.* *Christ in you, the hope of glory.* So *1. Cor. 29.* *Wherunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.* So *Phil. 4. 13.* *I can do all things,* through

Jehisto friend, we should not regard others no not our very graces, in comparison of Christ.

Gal. 2. 20.
Phil. 1. 6.
Deus nihil curat nisi dona sua. Aug.
When God crowneth us he doth but Crown his own gifts in us.

1. Pet. 2.
1. Pet. 2.
The Leader & Crownet.

is wrought in me in power. The word

(*word*, All things) though it be an universal, is not to be taken in the utmost extent, but according to the use of the like phrases in all languages, wherein the universal sign affixt, either to persons, or times, or places, or things, signifies a greater number, but not all without exception, as you may see by comparing these Scriptures together. Psal. 14.

4, 8, 9.

John 14. 26.

1 Cor. 10. 23.

So those words are to be understood in Phil. 4. 13.

through Christ that strengtheneth me. *low, poor and rich, honourable and base, something or nothing, &c.* through Christ that strengtheneth me. So in Cant. 4. ult. *Blow upon my Garden, that the spices thereof may send forth a fragrant smell.* We may puffe and blow our hearts out, and yet no savoury smell will flow forth, if Christ does not blow. So in Psal. 138. 3. *In the day when I cryed, thou answeredst me, and strengthenest me with strength in my soul.* Your graces, Christians, are Heavenly Plants of Gods own setting and watering; and certainly the Heavenly Husband-man will never suffer such Plants of renown to wither, for want of Heavenly sap; he will look to the strengthening, supporting, and nourishing the work of his own hand. He will cause the desires of his people to bud, and their graces to blossom, and their souls to be like a watered Garden, green and flourishing. Isa. 58. 11. compared with Isa. 35. 6, 7.

Fourthly, *When you look upon your graces, you must look upon them as an earnest of more glorious and unspeakable measures of grace and glory, that your souls shall be filled with at last.*

In Ephes. 1. 13, 14. *After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.* That little light and knowledge thou hast, is an earnest to thy soul, that thou shalt at last know, even as thou art known. 1 Cor. 13. 12. *For now we see through a glasse darkly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know, even as I am known.* Christians know but little of that they should know, they know but little of that they might know, they know but little of that others know, they know but little of that they desire to know, they know but little of that they shall know, when they shall come to know, even as they are known. And yet these weak and imperfect glimpses that they have of God and Heaven here, are infallible pledges of that perfect knowledge, and full prospect that they shall have of God and Heaven hereafter. So that that little spark of joy thou hast, is an earnest of those everlasting joyes that shall rest upon thy

head, when all shall be turning shall flye away, *Isa.* 35. 10. &c. And those that comfort thou hast now, are an earnest of thy swimming in those everlasting pleasures that be at Gods right hand, *Psal.* 16. *ult.* The least measures of grace, are an earnest of greater measures. God will not loose his earnest, though men often loose theirs. God will not despise the day of small things; he will make those that bring forth but thirty fold, to bring forth sixty fold, and those that bring forth sixty fold, to bring forth a hundred fold, &c. He, his Son and Spirit, are all eminently and fully ingaged to carry on the work of grace in his childrens souls. Therefore do not sit down and say, my light is but dim, and my love but weak, and my joy but a spark, that will quickly go out, &c. But alwayes remember, That those weak measures of grace thou hast, are a sure evidence of greater measures that God will confer upon thee in his own time, and in his own wayes, *Isa.* 64. 4, 5.

Fifthly, *When you look upon your graces, be sure that you look more at the truth of your graces, then at the measure of your graces.*

You must rather bring your graces to the touch-stone, to try their truth, then to the ballanceto weigh their measure. Many weak Christians are weighing their graces, when they should be a trying the truth of their graces, as if the quantity and measure of grace were more considerable then the Essence and nature of grace. And this is that that keeps many weak Saints in a dark, doubting, questioning, and despairing condition; yea, this makes their lives a very Hell. Weak Saints, if you will not observe this Rule, this Caution, when you look upon your graces, you will go sighing and mourning to your graves. Ah poor hearts! you should not be more cruel to your own souls, then God is. When God comes to a judgement of your spiritual estates, he doth not bring a pair of scales to weigh your graces, but a touch-stone to try the truth of your graces; and so should you deal by your own souls; if you deal otherwise, you are more cruel to your souls, then God would have you. And if you are resolved, That in this you will

is alibi quoniam.
In a Riddle.
Enigma is properly Obscure allegoria, an obscure Allegory, 'tis an Allegory with a mask, or, 'tis a cloudy, knotty, intricate speech, sealed and lockt up from vulgar apprehensions. That's a Riddle.

Lam. 1. 16.

Grace is homogeneousall:
Every twinkling of light,
is light; every drop of water,
is water; every spark of fire,
is fire; every drop of honey,
is honey. So every drop of grace
is grace; and if the least drop or spark of grace, be not worth acknowledging 'tis worth nothing.

not imitate the Lord, that sayes, *that joy and peace shall be none of your* *Grace* *and he that should comfort you, will stand afar off.* 'Tis good to own and acknowledge a little grace, though it be mingled with very much corruption; as that poor soul did, *Mark 9. 24. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief.* He had but a little little faith, & this was mixt with abundance of unbelief, and yet notwithstanding he acknowledges that little faith he had, *Lord I believe, help my unbelief.* His faith was so weak, that he accounts it little better then unbelief: Yet sayes he, *Lord I believe, help my unbelief.* The least measure of faith will make thee blessed here, and happy hereafter.

A Doctor cryed out upon his dying Bed (*Credo languida fide sed tamen fide*) *Much faith will yield unto us here our Heaven, and any faith (if true) will yield us Heaven hereafter.* So the Church in *Cant. 1. 5. I am black, but comely.* She had nothing to say for her beautifullnesse; yet she acknowledgeth her comeliness. *I am black, but comely.* Though she could not say she was clear, yet she could say she was comely. As she was free to confesse her blacknesse, so she was ingenuous to acknowledge her comeliness. *I am black, but comely.* Ah Christians! will you deal worse with your own souls, then you deal with your children? When you go to make a judgement of your childs affections, you look more to the truth of their affections, then you do to the strength of their affections; and will you be lesse ingenuous and favourable to your poor souls? If he deserves to be branded, that feasts his child, and starves his wife, what do you deserve, that can acknowledge the least natural good that is in a child, and yet will acknowledge none of that spiritual and heavenly good that is in your souls?

Sixthly and Lastly. *When you look upon your graces, look that you do not renounce and reject your graces (seen in the light of the Spirit) as a weak and worthless evidence of your interest in Christ, and that happinesse that comes by Christ.*

I know in these dayes many cry up Revelations and Visions.

sions (yea, the *inward* hearts) and make slight of the graces of Christ in the hearts of his people: Yea, they look upon grace as a poor weak thing. Ah Christians! take heed of this, else you will render null in a very great measure many precious Scriptures, (especially the Epistle of *John*) which were penned for the comfort and support of weak Saints.

But that this may stick and work, be pleased to carry home with you these three things.

First, Other precious Saints that are now triumphing in Heaven, have pleaded their interest in Gods love and hopes of a better life from graces inherent.

I'll only point at those Scriptures that speak out this truth. 1 *John* 3. 14. Chap. 2. 3. 4. *Job* 23. 10, 11, 12. And the whole 31 chapter of *Job*. *Psal.* 119. 6. *Isa.* 38. 2, 3. 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. All these Scriptures (with many others that might be produced) do with open mouth proclaim this truth. And surely to deny the fruit growing upon the Tree, to be an evidence that the Tree is alive, is to me as unreasonable, as it is absurd. Certainly, 'tis one thing to judge by our graces, and another thing to trust in our graces, to make a Saviour of our graces. There is a great deal of difference betwixt declaring and deserving: And if this be not granted, it will follow, that the Apostle hath sent us aside to a Covenant of works, when he exhorts us to *Use all diligence to make our calling and election sure*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5. to 10.

Secondly, carry home this with you, If Justification and Sanctification be both of them benefits of the Covenant of grace, then to evidence the one by the other, is no ways unlawful, nor no turning aside to a Covenant of works.

But our Justification and Sanctification are both of them benefits and blessings of the Covenant of grace.

Ergo.

In *Jer.* 33. 8. *I will pardon all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me (there's your Justification.) And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me (there's your Sanctification.) And therefore to evidence the one by the other, can be no ways unlawful,*

Grace (saith one) is the foundation of all our felicity, and comprehends all blessings, as Manna is said to have done all good taste. *Johns* Epistles are a rich Treasury for Christian Assurance.

Christians may doubtless look to their graces as evidences of their part in Christ and salvation (and the clearer and stronger they are, the greater will be their comfort) but not as Causes.

nor no turning aside to a

Thirdly, Carry home this with you, whatever gift of God in man brings him within the compasse of Gods Promise of Eternal Mercy, that gift must be an infallible evidence of salvation and happinesse.

But such are those gifts mentioned in those Scriptures that prove the first head.

Therefore they are infallible evidences of our salvation, and eternal happinesse.

I confesse a man may have many great gifts, and yet none of them bring him within the compasse of Gods Promise of Eternal Mercy. But I say, whatever gift of God in man brings him within the compasse of Gods Promise of eternal mercy, that gift must be an infallible evidence of his happinesse and blessednesse.

For the further clearing of this, I will instance in a gift of *Waiting*; where this gift is, it brings a man within the compasse of Gods Promise of eternal mercy. And had a man (as in a deserted state it often falls out) nothing under Heaven to shew for his happinesse, but only a waiting frame, this ought to bear him up from fainting and sinking. When the soul saith, My Sun is set, my day is turned into night, my light into darknesse, and my rejoycing into mourning, &c. Oh! I have lost the comforting presence of God, I have lost the quickening presence of God, I have lost the supporting presence of God, I have lost the incouraging presence of God, &c. and when I shall recover these sad losses, I know not. All that I can say, is this, That God keeps me in a waiting frame, weeping and knocking at the door of Mercy. Now I say, This waiting temper brings the soul within the compasse of the Promise of Eternal mercy. And certainly such a soul shall not miscarry. Take three Promises for this.

In Isa. 40. ult. *They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as Eagles, they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint.* (The mercy is the waiting-mans; but the waiting-man must give God leave to time his mercy for him.) So in Isa. 30. 18.

And.

Covet rather
graces, then
gifts; as to
pray more
fervently, tho
lesse notio-
nally or elo-
quently.
Stammering
Moses must
pray rather
then well
spoken Aaron.
The Corinthi-
ans came be-
hind in no
gift, 1 Cor. 1.
7. yet were
Babes and
Carnal, Chap.
3. 2, 3.

And therefore will he be gracious unto you. And hereafter will he be gracious, that he may have mercy upon you; for the Lord is a God of judgement: blessed are all they that wait for him. So in Isa. 64. 4. For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him. So in Isa. 49. 23. They shall not be ashamed that wait for me. Men are often ashamed, that wait upon the mountrains and hills. Men high and great often frustrate the expectation of waiting souls, and then they blush, and are ashamed and confounded that they have waited, and been deceived; but *They shall not be ashamed that wait for me*, sayes God, I will not deceive their expectation, and after all their waiting turn them off, and say, I have no mercy for you. Now I say, where this waiting temper is, which is all that many a poor soul hath to shew for everlasting happiness and blessednesse, that soul shall never miscarry. That God that dorth maintain and uphold the soul in this heavenly waiting frame, in the appointed season will speak life and love, mercy and glory, to the waiting soul.

And so I have done with the third use, which was to stir you up to look upon your graces, with Cautions.

The fourth Duty is,

To perswade weak Saints not to turn aside from the wayes of God, nor from the service of God, because of any hardships or difficulties that they meet with in his wayes, or service.

There is a very great aptnes in weak Saints to take offence almost at every thing, and to be discouraged by the least opposition, affliction, and temptation, and so to turn aside from the good old way. Now that no difficulties, nor hardships may turn you out of the way that is called holy, consider seriously of these few things.

First, consider this, The Lord will sweeten more and more his services to you.

He will make his work to be more & more easie to your souls; he will sute thy burden to thy back, and thy work to thy hand, O weak soul. Thou shalt find that his grace will be sufficient to hold thee up, and carry thee on, notwithstanding

Vide Lyra and Junius on the words.

That is, they shall be advanced by me to great happiness and glory, to great dignity and felicity, for in the Hebrew Dialect, Ad-verbs of denying signifie the contrary, to the import of that Verb whereunto they are joy- ned, as might be shewed by many Scriptures.

2 Cor. 12. 9.

2 Cor. 5. 14.

The Philosopher told his friends when they came into his little low Cottage (*Antautenouk apesitbesi*) The Gods are here with me. Surely God, and Christ, and the Spirit are and will be with weak Saints, to aid and assist them in every gracious work.

Prov. 11. 18,
19. & 21. 21.

any difficulties or discouragements in the way. He will shed abroad that love that shall enchain thy soul, both to keep close to his service, and to delight in his service. He will make all his services to be easie to thee, he will vouchsafe to thee that assisting grace that shall keep up thy head and heart from fainting and sinking under discouragements, as you may see in *Ezek. 36. 25, 26, 27. 28.* And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgements, and doe them. So in *Psal. 63. 8.* My soul followeth hard after thee (I but how comes this to passe?) Thy right hand upholds me. I feel thy hand under me, drawing of my soul off after thee. Oh! were not thy gracious hand under me, I should never follow hard after thee. The Lord will put under his everlasting arms, O weak Christian, and therefore though thy feet be apt to slide, yet his everlasting arms shall bear thee up. Therefore be not discouraged, doe not turn aside from those paths that drop marrow and fatnesse, though there be a Lyon in the way.

Secondly, consider this, O weak Saint, That there is less danger and hardship in the wayes of Christ, then there is in the wayes of sin, Satan, or the world.

That soul doth but leap out of the Frying-pan into the fire, that thinks to mend himself by turning out of the way that is called holy. Oh! the horrid drudgery that is in the wayes of sin, Satan, or the world. Thy worst day in Christs service, is better then thy best dayes (if I may so speak) in sin or Satans service. Satan will pay the sinner home at last with the losse of God, Christ, Heaven, and his soul for ever. But in the way of righteousness is life, joy, peace, honour, and in the path-way thereof there is no death, *Prov. 12. 28.* His wayes are wayes of pleasantnesse and all his paths are peace, *Prov. 3. 17.*

Thirdly, Remember, O weak Saint, That all those hardships that thou meetest with, do only reach the outward man.

They only reach the ignoble, the baser part of man; they meddle not, they touch not the noble part. With my mind I serve the Law of God, though with my flesh the Law of sin, *Rom.*

7. 22. *And when the Lord of God, after the inward man, hath been many of the Heathen have encouraged themselves in this very consideration, against the troubles and dangers of this life. All the Arrowes that are shot at a Christian, stick in his Buckler, they never reach his conscience, his soul. The raging waves beat sorely against Noah's Ark, but they touch not him. The soul is of too noble a nature to be toucht by troubles. Jacobs hard service under Laban, and his being nipr by the frost in winter, and scorcht by the Sun in summer, did only reach his outward man; his soul had high communion, and sweet fellowship with God, under all his hardships. Ah Christian! bear up bravely, for whatever hardships thou meetest with in the wayes of God, shall only reach thy outward man; and under all these hardships thou mayest have as high and sweet communion with God, as if thou hadst never known what hardships meant.*

Fourthly, Tell me, O weak Saints, have not you formerly enjoyed such sweet refreshings while you have been in the very service of God, as hath out-weighed all the troubles and hardships that your souls have met with? I know you have, and you know that you have often found that Scripture made good upon your hearts, *Psal. 19. 11. Moreover by them is thy servant warned, and in keeping of them there is great reward.* (Mark) he doth not say, *For keeping of them there is great reward*, though that's a truth: But, *In keeping of them there is great reward*. While the soul is at work, God throws in the reward. Don't you remember, O weak Christians, when you have been in the service and way of God, how he hath cast in joy at one time, and peace at another? &c. Oh the smiles, the kisses, the sweet discoveries that your souls have met with, whilst you have been in his wayes. Ah poor souls! don't you know, that one houres being in the bosome of Christ will make you forget all your hardships. Heaven at last will make amends for all, and the more hardships you find in the wayes of God, the more sweet will Heaven be to you, when you come there. O how sweet is a Harbour after a long storm, and a Sun shine day after

Anaxagoras,
Plato, and
others.

Gen. 31. 40.

Hof. 2. 14.

Austin saith,
If a man
should serve
the Lord a
thousand
years it
would not
deserve an
hour of the
reward in
Heaven,
much lesse an
eternity, &c.

after a dark & tempestuous winter, after a sharp winter. The miseries and sorrows that a man meets with in this world, will exceedingly sweeten the glory of that other world.

Lastly, consider, What hardships and difficulties the men of this world run through, to get the world, and undo their own souls.

They rise early, go to bed late, they go from one end of the world to another, and venture through all manner of dangers, deaths and miseries, to gain those things that are vain, uncertain, vexing, and dangerous to their souls: And wilt not thou, as a good Souldier of Christ, endure a little hardship for the honour of thy Captain, and thine own internal and eternal good? Thou art listed under Christs colours, and therefore thou must arm thy self against all difficulties and discouragements. The number of difficulties makes the Christians conquest the more illustrious. A gracious man should be made up all of fire, overcoming and consuming all oppositions, as fire does the stubble. All difficulties should be but whetstones to his fortitude.

The fifth Duty is this:

You that are weak Saints should observe how Christ keeps your wills and affections.

That man is kept indeed, whose will and affection is kept close to Christ: And that man is lost with a witness, whose will and affections are won from Christ. Weak Saints are more apt to observe their own actions, then their wills and affections, and this proves a snare unto them; therefore observe, your affections, how they are kept, for if they are kept close to Christ, if they are kept faithful to Christ, (though thy foot may slide from Christ) all is well. The Apostle Rom. 7. observ'd that his will and affections were kept close to Christ, even then when he was tyrannically captivated, and carried by the prevalency of sin, from Christ, *With my mind I serve the Law of God (sayes he) and what I do I allow not, therefore it is no more I that doth it, but sin that dwelleth in me.* My will stands close to Christ, and my affections are faithful to Christ, though by the prevalency of corruption I am

now

Psal. 127. 2.
Mat. 16. 16.

2 Tim. 2. 3, 4.

As Chrysostom
said of Peter.

now and then carried away from Christ. 'Tis one thing to be taken up by an Enemy, and another thing for a man to lay down his Weapons at his Enemies feet. I am, saith the Apostle, a forc't man, *I do what I hate*; I do what I never intended. The heart may be sound, when more external and inferiour parts are not. The heart of a man may be sound God-ward, and Christ-ward, and holiness-ward, when yet there may be many defects and weakneses in his conversation. Now a weak Christian should be very studious to observe how his heart stands God-wards; for the man is as his heart is, if that be right with Christ, then all is well; therefore sayes Solomon, Prov. 4. 23. *Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.* The Hebrew runs more fully thus, *Before all, or, Above all keepings, keep thy heart; for out of it is the goings forth of lives.* The heart is the Spring and Fountain of all natural and spiritual actions, 'tis the *Primum Mobile*, the great wheel that sets all other wheels a going, 'tis the great Monarch in the Isle of man, therefore keep it with all custody and caution, or else bid farewell to all true joy, peace, and comfort. When the heart stands right towards Christ, Christ will pardon much, and passe by much.

If the ravished Virgin in the time of the Law, tyred out, she was guiltlesse. So when a poor soul, ravished by the power of corruption, and strength of Satans temptations, cries out, Lord I would not for all the world sin against thee, I would not distrust thee, I would not be impatient under thy afflicting hand, I would not be proud under thy mercifull hand; but Lord, these Sons of Zeruiah, these corruptions, are too hard for me, they commit a Rape upon me, they ravish me of my Jesus, and of my joy, and of my peace; Lord help me, Lord deliver me. Now these weakneses shall not be charged upon the soul. The ravished Virgin under the Law, if she cryed out, was guiltlesse. And certainly, God is not, nor will not be less merciful and gracious to his people under the Gospel, who are still a crying out against their sins, and Satans assaults. Surely those sins shall never be a Christians bane, that are now his greatest burden. 'Tis not

The heart is
(Camera om-
nipotentis Ro-
gis.) The pre-
sence Cham-
ber of the
King of Hea-
ven.

2 Sam. 3. 39.

falling into the water, but lying in the water, that drowns. 'Tis not falling into sin, but lying in sin, that damns. If sin and thy heart be two, Christ and thy heart are one. If thy heart be Christ-ward, thou art so happy that nothing can make thee miserable.

Sixthly,

Take heed of making sense and feeling a Judge of your condition;

Though there is nothing more dangerous, yet there is nothing more ordinary, then for weak Saints to make their sense and feeling the Judge of their condition. Ah poor souls! this is dishonourable to God, and very disadvantageous to your selves. Sense is sometimes opposite to reason, but alwayes to faith; therefore do as those Worthies did, 2 Cor. 5. 8, 9. *We walk by faith, and not by sight.* For a man to argue thus, Surely God is not my God, for I am not enlightened, I am not quickned, I am not melted; I am not raised, I am not enlarged as formerly. Oh! I have not those sweet answers and returns of Prayer, that once I had. Oh! I can't find the Lords quickning presence, nor his invlivening presence, nor his humbling presence, nor his encouraging presence, as once I have; therefore surely my condition is not good. Oh! I am more backward to good, then formerly; and more prone to evil, then formerly; therefore I am afraid that God is not my God, and that the work of grace is not through upon me. Oh! God does not look upon me as in the dayes of old; nor speak to me, as in the dayes of old; nor carry it towards me, as in the dayes of old; and therefore I am afraid that all is naught.

Verily, if you will make sense and feeling the Judge of your estate and condition, you will never have peace nor comfort all your dayes. Thy estate, O Christian, may be very good, when sense and feeling sayes 'tis very bad. That child cannot but be perplexed, that thinks his father doth not love him, because he does not alwayes feel him smoothing and stroking of him: Christians, you must remember, that 'tis one thing for God to love you, and another thing for God to tell you that he loves you. Your happinesse lyes in the first, your comfort in the second. God hath stoppt

his

Sense and reason in spirituall things, sayes Luther, is *(Noxia bestis)* An harmfull Beast, that will destroy and pull down what faith builds up.

his ear against the prayers of many a precious soul, whom he hath dearly loved. The best of men have at times lost that quickening, ravishing, and comforting presence of God, that once they have enjoyed. And verily, he that makes sense and carnal reason a Judge of his condition, shall be happy and miserable, bl. st and curst, sav'd and lost, many times in a day, yea, in an hour. The counsel that I would give to such a soul that is apt to set up reason in the room of faith, is this, Whatsoever thy estate and condition be, never make sense and feeling the Judge of it, but only the word of God. Did ever God appoint carnal reason, sense and feeling, to be a Judge of thy spiritual estate? Surely no, And why then wilt thou subject thy soul to their judgments? God will judge thee at last by his word, *John 12. 48.* *The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge you in the last day.* Carnal reason is an enemy to faith, 'tis still a crossing and contradicting of faith, it fills the mind full of cavils and prejudices, full of Pleas and Arguments to keep Christ and the soul asunder, and the soul and the Promises asunder, and the soul and peace and comfort asunder. 'Twill never be well with thee, so long as thou art swayed by carnal reason, and reliest more upon thy five Senses, then the four Evangelists. Remember, *Job* was as famous for his confidence, as for his patience, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him, Job 13. 15.* As the body lives by breathing, so the soul lives by believing, &c.

Psal. 80. 4.
Lam. 3. 44.
Psal. 119. 25.
37. 40. 88.
107. 149. 154.
156. 159.
Psal. 42. 5.
Cant. 3. 1, 2, 3.
Ila. 54. 7, 8.

The Duties of Strong Saints to the Weak.

WE come now to the last thing propounded, and that is, The Duties of strong Saints to those that are weak. I intend at this time to finish this Point, and therefore shall not speak every thing that might be spoken: being not of their minds, that think a man never speaks enough, that speaks not all that may be spoken to an Argument. I shall (as near as I can) instance in those Duties that are most weighty and worthy: And surely those souls that are serious and conscientious in the discharge of these, cannot nor will not be negligent in the discharge of the rest. Now there are Eleven Duties that strong Saints are to perform to those that are weak.

And the first is this.

Those that are strong, ought to bear with the infirmities of the weak.

Rom. 15. 1. We then that are strong (saith the Apostle) ought to bear with the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. The word that's rendred, *To bear* (*Bastazen*) signifies to bear as Pillars do bear the weight and burden of the house: To bear, as Porters do bear their burdens, or as the bones do bear the flesh; or rather as Parents bear their Babes in their arms.

Bear the infirmities. Mark, he doth not say the Inormities, but the Infirmities; he doth not say the wickednesse, but the weaknesse. The strong ought to bear with the infirmities of the weak. The Lord bears with the weaknesse of his children. *Peter is weak*, and sinful through weaknesse, he will not let the Lord Jesus wash his feet, *John 12.* but the Lord Jesus knowing that this was from weaknesse, and not from wickednesse, he passes it over, and no withstanding his unkind refusall, he washes his feet. *Thomas is very weak*, *I will not believe* (sayes he) *except I shall see in his hands the print of the nailes, and thrust my hand into his side.* Now this

this Christ bears with much tendernesse and sweetnesse, as you may see in *Vers. 27.* Then said he to Thomas, reach hither thy fingers, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithlesse, but believing. The Lord Jesus doth as it were open his wounds afresh, he overlooks his weaknesse; well, saith he, seeing it is so, that thou wilt not believe, I will rather bleed afresh then thou shalt dye in thy unbelief. So the three Disciples that Christ had singled out to watch with him one hour, *Mar. 29.* they shewed a great deal of weaknesse to be sleeping, when their Lord was a sorrowing; to be snoring when their Saviour was sighing, &c. Yet Christ bears this, and carries it sweetly towards them, and excuses their weaknesse, *Vers. 41.* The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. Oh how sweetly doth the Lord carry it! Every new man is two men, he hath a contrary principle in him; the flesh and the Spirit. The Spirit, the noble part is willing; but the flesh, the ignoble part, is weak and way-ward.

Now shall the Lord thus bear with his weak ones, and shall not strong Saints bear also? Remember strong Christians, there was a day when you were as weak as others; as apt to fall, as others; as easily conquered, as others; and if then the Lord carried it sweetly towards you, let the same Spirit be in you, towards those that are weak: It will be no grief of heart to you, if in this you act like your Lord and Saviour.

If you do not bear with the infirmities of the weak, who shall? who will? this wicked world cannot, nor will not. The world will make them transgressors for a word, and watch for their halting, and therefore you had need to bear with them so much the more: The worlds cruelty should stir up your compassions.

Secondly,

As it is your duty to bear with them, so it is your duty to receive them into communion with you.

Rom. 14. 1. Him that is weak in the faith receive you, but not in doubtful disputations.

Him that is weak in the faith receive. That is, him that is not

1Sa. 29. 21.
1Cr. 20. 10.

not thoroughly perswaded of all things pertaining to Christian liberty, about things indifferent. *Them that are weak in the faith receive.* He doth not say, *Them that have no faith receive*: For there is no Rule for the Saints or Churches to receive them into communion that have no faith, that have no fellowship with the Father and the Son. But *Him that is weak in the faith, saith he, receive.*

*Proslambnes-
tho.*

The word that is here rendred *Receive*, signifies to receive into our bosome with charitable affection. The Greek word signifies three things.

1 It signifies to receive weak Saints *As our own bowels*: to receive them with the greatest tendernesse, affection, pity, and compassion that possibly can be. So the same Greek word is used in the Epistle of *Philemon*, vers. 12. where *Paul* intreats *Philemon*, to receive *Onesimus* as his own bowels. The word there is the same word with this in the Text. So must the strong receive the weak, even as their own bowels. Receive them with the greatest affection, with the greatest compassion that possibly can be.

2 The word signifies *Patiently to bear with the weak when they are received*: And not to take them into your bosoms, into your communion one day, and cast them out the next, but patiently to bear with them, as well as affectionately to receive them.

Kermes.

It was a Heathen Prince that Crowned his Steer-man in the morning, and beheaded him in the evening of the same day, &c.

3 The word signifies *By fatherly instruction to seek to restore him*. 'Tis not the will of Christ that weak Saints should be rejected, or that the door of entrance should be shut against them, till they are stronger, or till they have attain'd to such heights, and such perfections of grace, and Divine enjoyments of God as others have attain'd. Remember this, as the weakest faith (if true) gives the soul a right to all that internal and eternal worth that is in Christ: So the weakest faith (if true) gives a man a real right unto all the externall priviledges and favours that come by Christ. In *Rom. 15. 7. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ receiv-*

ed

ved us to the glory of God. This is the standing Rule for all the Saints and Churches in the world to go by. 'Tis not their wills, but these two Scriptures last cited, that are the standing Rules by which all the Churches on Earth are to go by, in the admithon of Members.

Them that are weak in the faith are to be received by you, because the Lord Jesus hath received them. Christ does not receive the strong to the glory of God, and cast off the weak. No, the Lord Jesus gathers the weak into his bosom, and tenderly dandles them upon his knee. He receives the weak to glory, as well as the strong; therefore saith the Apostle, *As the Lord hath received them, so do you.*

But ejected none, in whom he saw (*Aliquid Christi*) *Any thing of Christ*, but gave them the right hand of fellowship. Such persons and Churches can never answer it to Christ, that keep the door of admission shut against souls truly gracious, though they are but weak in grace, though they have attain'd to such a measure of light, or degrees of love, or to such perfections in holiness, as such and such have done: No, the standing Rule is, *Him whom the Lord hath received, receive.*

If weak Saints shall desire communion, and be willing to walk in the ways that Jesus Christ hath appointed his Saints to walk in, the Churches ought to give them the right hand of fellowship. And that's the second Duty that lyes upon the strong, *viz. That they are to receive the weak into communion and fellowship with them, and that with the greatest affection, love, and compassion, that possibly can be.*

A third Duty that lyes upon strong Saints to the weak, is this,

They must look more upon their graces, then upon their weaknesses.

'Tis a sad thing when they shall borrow Spectacles to behold their weak brethrens weaknesses, and refuse Looking-glasses wherein they may see their weak brethrens graces. Saints that are strong, ought to look more upon the virtues of weak Saints, then upon their miscarriages. When Christ saw but a little moral good in the young man, the Text saith, that *He lookt upon him, and loved him.* And shall not

Mark 10. 12.

we

If moral virtue could be seen with mortal eyes, it would soon draw all hearts to it self, saith Platon. What then should grace do? the least dram of which, is of more worth then all the moral virtues in the world.

we look upon a weak Saint, and love him, when we see the love of God, and the Image of God upon him? Shall moral virtue take the eye, and draw the love of Christ? And shall not supernatural grace in a weak Christian, take our eyes, and draw our hearts? Shall we eye a little gold in much earth? And shall we not eye a little grace where there is much corruption?

It is an insufferable weaknesse (I had almost said) for persons to suffer their affections to run out only to such that are of their Judgements, and to love, prize, and value persons according as they sute their opinions, and not according to what of the Image of God shines in them. But if this be not far from a Gospel spirit, & from that God-like spirit that should be in Saints, I know nothing. It speaks out much of Christ within, to own where Christ owes, and love where Christ loves, and imbrace where Christ imbraces, and to be one with every one that is practically one with the Lord Jesus. Christ can't but take it very unkindly at our hands, if we should disown any upon whom he hath set his Royal stamp. And I bless his grace that hath drawn out my desires and endeavours to love, own, and honour the people of Christ, according to what of the appearances of Christ I see in them. And, if I am not much mistaken, this is the high-way to that joy, peace, and comfort, the want of which makes many a mans life a Hell. God looks more on the bright side of the cloud, then he doth on the dark, and so should we.

It was the Honour of *Vespasian*, That he was more ready to conceal the Vices of his Friends, then their Virtues. Surely there is much of God in that soul, that is upon a Gospel account more careful and skilful to conceal the vices of weak Saints, then their virtues. Many in these dayes do justly incur the censure which that sower Philosopher putt upon *Gramarians*, That they were better acquainted with the evil of *Ulysses*, then with their own.

Fourthly,

It is the duty of strong Saints, in things indifferent to deny themselves, to please the weak.

1 Cor.

Diogenes apud laertium. l. 6.

1 Cor. 8. 13. I will not make my Brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, least I make my Brother to offend. Strong Saints must stand unchangeably resolved neither to give offence carelessly, nor to take offence causlessly. Says the Apostle, I will not stand to dispute my Christian Liberty, but will rather lay it down at my weak brothers feet, then I will by the use of it offend one for whom Christ hath dyed. 1 Cor. 9. 22. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. That is, I condescended and went to the uttermost that possibly I could (without sin) to win and gain upon the weak; I displeased my self in things that were of an indifferent nature, to please them. Thou oughtest not, O strong Christian! by the use of thy Christian liberty, to put a stumbling-block before thy weak Brother, Rom. 15. 2. We then that are strong, ought to bear with the infirmities of the weak, and not to please our selves. Let every one of us please his Neighbour for his good to edification. He doth not say, Let every one of us please the lust of his Neighbour, but let every one of us please his Neighbour for his good to edification. Let us in things of an indifferent nature. so yield as to please our neighbour. There were some that thought they might observe dayes, others thought they might not. Some thought they might eat meat, others thought they might only eat Hearbs. Why, saith the Apostle, in these things that are of an indifferent nature, I will rather displease and deny my self, to profit my Neighbour, then I will by the use of my liberty, occasion my Neighbour to offend. I, this is true Christian love indeed, for a man to crosse himself to please his Neighbour, so it may be for his souls edification. But this heavenly love is driven almost out of the world, which causeth men to dislike those things in others, which they flatter in themselves.

A fifth Duty incumbent upon strong Saints, is,

To support the weak.

1 Thess. 5. 14. Support the weak, be patient towards all men. Look what the crutch is to the lame, and the beam of the

Look what
the Nurse is
to the Child,
the Oak to
the Ivy, the
House to the
Vine, that
should strong
Saints be to
the weak. &c.
2 Cor. 2. 7.

the house is to the child, so should strong Saints
to be to the weak. Strong Saints are to be crutches to the
weak, they are to be (as it were) beams to bear up the
weak. Strong Saints are to set too their shoulder, to shore
up the weak by their counsels, prayers, tears, and examples.
Strong Saints must not deal by the weak, as the Herd of
Deer do by the wounded Deer, they forsake it, and push it
away. O no, when a poor weak Saint is wounded by a
temptation, or by the power of some corruption, then they
that are strong ought to succour and support such a one,
lest he be swallowed up of sorrow. When you that are
strong see a weak Saint staggering and reeling under a
temptation or affliction; O know, 'tis then your duty to put
both your hands underneath, to support him that he faint
not, that he miscarries not in such an hour, *Isa. 35. 3. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.*

Strengthen the weak hands. That is, hands that hang down.
And confirm the feeble knees. That is, such knees that by reason
of feebleness are ready to fall, strengthen such, that is, in-
courage them, by casting in a Promise, by casting in thy ex-
periences, or by casting in the Experiences of other Saints,
that so they may be supported. It may be his case was once
thine; if so, then tell him what Promises did support thee,
what discoveries of God did uphold thee; tell him, what
tastes, what fights, and what incomes thou hadst, and how
bravely thou didst bear up by the strength of his everlasting
arms that were under thee, &c.

A sixth Duty that is incumbent upon strong Saints, is
To take heed of making weak Saints halt and go lame in a way of
holiness, or of keeping them off from the ways of God, or of turn-
ing them out of the ways of God.

That's the meaning of that Scripture (as I conceive) *Luke*
17. 2. And of that, *Mat. 18. 10.* Take heed that ye offend not
one of these little ones, for their Angels doe alwayes behold the
face of my father. You are apt to slight them because they are
weak in grace and holiness, and so you are apt to cause
them to halt; but take heed of this, they have glorious gli-
stering Countreys that do attend them, therefore take heed
that

that ye should stand up for these Angels as for many Champions, and ready to fight them, and fight for them. A man were better offend and anger all the Devils in hell, and all the Witches in the world, then to anger and offend the least of Christs little ones. If Cain do but lowre upon Abel, God will arraign him for it, *Why is thy countenance cast down?* If Miriam do but mutter against Moses, God will spit in her face for it. That is a very dreadful word, *Mar. 18. 6. Take heed how ye offend one of these little ones* (you make nothing of it, but saith Christ, take heed) for it were better that a millstone (A huge Mil-stone, as the Greek word signifies, such a one as an Ass can but turn about. This kind of punishment the greatest Malefactors among the Jews were put to in those dayes, saith Jerom) and he cast into the middle of the Sea; so it is word for word in the Greek: The middle being deepest and furthest off from the shore, rendring his estate most miserable and irrecoverable.

Seventhly,

It is the Duty of strong Saints to sute all things to the capacity of the weak.

To sute all their prayers, and all their discourses to the capacity of the weak. *Paul was good at this, To the weak I became as weak.* Paul was a man as strong in natural and acquired parts, as any living, and he knew how to word it, and to carry it in as lofty strains, as any that breathed, yet who more plain in his Preaching, then Paul? It hath many a time made my heart sad, to think how those men will answer it in the day of Christ, that affect lofty strains, high notions, and cloudy expressions, that make the plain things of the Gospel dark and obscure.

Many Preachers in our dayes are like *Heracitus*, who was called *The Dark Doctor*, they affect sublime notions, obscure expressions, uncouth phrases, making plain truths difficult; and easie truths hard. *They darken counsel with words without knowledge, Job 38. 2.* Studied expressions, and high notions in a Sermon, are like *Asahels* carkasse in the way, that did only stop men, and make them gaze, but did no wayes profit them, or better them. 'Tis better to present

Gen. 4.

Num. 12. 14.

truth in her nature, and with
counterfeit Pearls.

That's a remarkable Scripture, 1 Cor. 3. 2. *And I brethren could not speak unto you, as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto Babies in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.* The Apostle did not soar aloft in the clouds, and expresse the Mysteries of the Gospel in such a dark obscure way as that poor creatures could not be able to pick out the mind of God in it; no, but he suted all his discourses to their capacities, and so must you.

Eighthly,

It is your duty to labour to strengthen weak Saints against sin, and to draw them to holiness Argumentatively.

When a strong Saint comes to deal with one that is weak, and would strengthen him against sin, he must do it Argumentatively; and when he would draw to holiness, he must do it Argumentatively. 1 John 2. 1, 2. compared with Chap. 7. 9. *My little Children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not. What things were those he wrote? Mark, Chap. 1. 7. If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all sins.* Here he fenceth them against sin, by one of the strongest and choicest Arguments that the whole Book of God affords, by an Argument that's drawn from the souls communion with God. And then in Vers. 9. *If we confesse our sins, he is faithfull and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the father.* Here the Apostle labours to strengthen weak Saints Argumentatively, even by the strongest Arguments that the whole Book of God affords. So Vers. 12, 13. *I write unto you little Children, because your sins are forgiven you, for his names sake, &c.* So in Vers. 18. *Little Children, it is the last times, and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time.* So Vers. 28. *And now little Children abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.*

ing.

the Apostle labours to strengthen weak Saints in a way of holiness, and to fence them against ways of wickedness Argumentatively; and so must you; this being the ready way to convince them, and to make a conquest upon them, &c.

The Ninth Duty that lyes upon strong Saints, is

To cast a mantle over the infirmities of the weak.

Now there is a three-fold Mantle that should be cast over the infirmities of the weak. There is a Mantle of Wisdom, a Mantle of Faithfulness, And a Mantle of Compassion, which is to be cast over all the infirmities of weak Saints.

First, Strong Saints are to cast a Mantle of Wisdom over the infirmities of weak Saints. They are not to present their sins in that ugliness, and with such aggravations, as may terrifie, as may sink, as may make a weak Saint to despair, or may drive him from the Mercy-seat, or as may keep him and Christ asunder, or as may unfit him for the discharge of Religious duties. It is more a weakness then a virtue in strong Christians, when a weak Saint is fallen; to aggravate his fall to the uttermost, and to present his sins in such a dreadful dress, as shall amaze him, &c. It often proves very prejudicial & dangerous to weak Saints, when their infirmities are aggravated beyond Scripture-grounds, and beyond what they are able to bear. He that shall lay the same strength to the rubbing of an Earthen Dish as he does to the rubbing of a Pewter Platter, instead of clearing it, shall surely break it all to pieces. The application is easie, &c.

Secondly, There is a Mantle of Faithfulness that is to be cast over the infirmities of weak Saints. A man should never discover the infirmities of a weak Saint, especially to such that have neither skill, nor will to heal & bury them. The world will but blaspheme, and blaze them abroad, to the dishonour of God, to the reproach of Religion, and to the grief & scandal of the weak, &c. They will with *Ham*, rather call upon others to scoff at them, then bring a mantle to cover them, &c. *Ham* was curs'd for that he did disco-

Parisenfis said sometimes concerning Trifles, It is (said he) as if a man should see a Fly or a Flea on a mans forehead, and for that should presently take a Beetle to knock him on the head, to kill the Fly.

ver his fathers nakedness to his brethren, when it was in his power to have covered it. He saw it, and might have drawn a curtain over it, but would not; and for this, by a Spirit of Prophecy, he was curst by his Father, *Gen. 9. 22.* This age is full of such Monsters, that rejoyce to blaze abroad the infirmities of the Saints, and these certainly Justice hath or will curse.

Thirdly, There is a Mantle of Compassion that must be cast over the weakneses and infirmities of weak Saints. When a weak Saint comes to see his sin, and the Lord gives him to lye down in the dust, and to take shame and confusion to himself, that he hath dishonoured God, and caused Christ to bleed afresh, and griev'd the Spirit, &c. Oh now thou must draw a covering, and cast a Mantle of love and compassion over his soul, that he may not be swallowed up with sorrow: Now thou must confirm thy love to him, and carry it with as great tendernes and sweetness after his fall, as if he had never fallen. This the Apostle presses, *2 Cor. 2. 7.* Love, sayes the wise man, *covereth all sin.* Loves Mantle is very large: Love claps a Plaister upon every sore; Love hath two hands, and makes use of both, to hide the fears of weak Saints. Christ, O strong Saints, casts the Mantle of his righteousness over your weakneses, and will not you cast the Mantle of love over your brothers infirmities?

Tenthly,

'Tis the Duty of strong Saints to sympathize with the weak; to rejoyce with them when they rejoyce, and to mourn with them when they mourn.

2 Cor. 11. 29. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

Thuanus reports of Lodovicus Marsacus, a Knight of France, when he was led with other Martyrs that were bound with cords, going to Execution, and he for his dignity was not bound, he cryed, *Give me my chains too, let me be a Knight of the same Order.*

It should be between a strong Saint, and a weak, as 'tis between two Lute-strings, that are tuned one to another;

no

I have known a good old man, said Bernard, who when he had heard of any that had committed some notorious offence, was wont to say with himself, *Ille bodie & ego crui.* He fell to day, so may I to morrow, &c.

† οὐδ' ἀνίσταται.

Scandalizetari. Scandalized.

* πῦρ, οὐ μίαν. As not on fire. Thuan Hist.

no sooner one is struck, but the other trembles: no sooner should a weak Saint be struck, but the strong should tremble. Remember them that are in bonds as bound with them, Heb.

13. 3.

The Romans punished one that was seen looking out at his window with a Crown of Roses on his head, in a time of publick calamity; and will not God punish those that don't sympathize with Joseph in his afflictions? surely he will. Amos 6. 1. to ult.

Lastly,

'Tis the duty of the strong to give to the weak the honour that is due unto them.

1 Pet. 3. 7. They have the same Name, the same Baptism, the same Profession, the same Faith, the same Hope, the same Christ, the same Promises, the same Dignity, and the same Glory with you; therefore speak honourably of them, and carry it honourably towards them. Let not them be under your feet, that Christ has laid near his heart, &c. And so much for this second Doctrine.

We come now to the next words.

EPHES.

EPHES. 3. 8.

Unto me who am lesse then the least of all Saints, is this Grace given, &c.

2d pte.



E shall speak now to the word *Grace*. The Greck word (*Caris*) that's here rendred *Grace* hath a two-fold signification. Sometimes it's taken for the gracious favour and good will of God, whereby he is pleased of his own free love to accept and own poor sinners in the Son of his love, for his own. This is called the first grace, because 'tis the fountain of all other graces, and the spring from whence they flow. And it's therefore called grace, because it makes a man gracious with God.

Secondly, This word *Caris*, that's here rendred *Grace*, is taken for the gifts of grace, and they are of two sorts, special, or common. Common grace is that which Hypocrites may have, and in which they may excell and go beyond the choicest Saints, as in a gift of knowledge, a gift of utterance, a gift of prayer, a gift of tongues, &c. A man may have these, and many other excellent gifts, and yet miscarry, yea, fall as low as Hell; witnesse Judas, Demas, the Scribes and Pharisees, &c.

Secondly, There is special grace, as Faith, Love, Humility, Meeknesse, which the Apostle reckons up, *Gal. 5. 22, 23*. Now here by Grace you may either understand the gracious favour of God, (*Unto me who am lesse then the least of all Saints is this choyce favour given, that I should Preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ*) or else you may take it for the gifts of grace, both saving and com-

Mat. 7. 21, 22,
23, 25.
Chap. 1. 13.

common, which the Apostle had given him in order to the discharge of his Ministerial Office; which by the special favour of God he was advanced to.

The word Grace being thus opened, we may from thence Observe. First,

That the Lord gives his best Gifts, to his best beloved Ones.

Unto me (saith the Apostle) who am lesse then the least of all Saints, is this grace given.

For the opening and clearing of this Point, I shall premise these four things.

1. To shew you what those best Gifts are, that God bestows upon his best beloved ones.

2. I shall shew you the Manner of his giving the best gifts to his beloved ones. Or the Difference there is between Christs giving, and the worlds giving.

3. And then the Excellency of those gifts that Christ gives, above all other gifts that the world gives.

4. And lastly, The Reason why Christ gives his best gifts to his best beloved ones.

For the first, What are those best gifts that Christ bestows upon his best beloved ones?

I shall not instance in those Common gifts that they have in common with others, but rather shew unto you those special gifts that he bestows upon them; and of those I shall single out them that are most choyce, and that carry most in them; of the glory, favour, and good will of him that dwelt in the Bush.

And the first is this.

He gives light to his beloved ones; and light is a pleasant thing to behold, as the Wise man speaks. He gives spirituall light, which is a mercy of mercies. Ephesians 5.

14. *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.* So John 1. 7, 8, 9. *He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light that was the true light*

Eccles. 1. 7.
*arise
or. Shine
upon thee.
Life without
light, is but a
lifeless fire.

Vide *Cameron*,
and *Augustine*,
on the words.

When *Telema* saw a
great light that guided
him and his
Father, in a
dark room,
Surely (said
he) there is
some God in
it.
Mal. 4. 2.

2 Cor. 3. 5.
If there be
such a power
in fallen man
to repent, and
believe, &c.
to what pur-
pose was the
coming of
Christ into
the world?
1 John 2. 9.
1 John 3. 8.
And why do
natural men
when their
consciences
are awaken'd
so cry out,
That they are
as able to stop
the Sun in his
course, to raise
the dead, and
to make a
world, as they
are able to
themselves to
repent. &c.

light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world. He gives that light whereby his people are enabled so to see him to be the greatest evil, and himself to be the chiefest good. He gives that light that melts the soul, that humbles the soul, that warms the soul, that quickens the soul, that quiets the soul, and that glads the soul; Man is not born with heavenly light in his heart, as he is born with a tongue in his mouth. Till Christ comes and sets up a light in the soul, the soul lives in darknesse, and lyes in darknesse, yea, in darknesse in the very abstract. *Ephes.* 5. 8. *Ye were sometimes darknesse, but now are ye light in the Lord.* Saints are alwayes in the Sun-shine, therefore they should be like a Christall glasse, with a light in the midst, which appeareth in every part.

A Christian should be like the Lamp in the story, that never went out. Were it not for the Sun, it would be perpetual night in the world, notwithstanding all Star-light, and Torch-light, and Moon-light. 'Tis not the Torch-light of natural parts, and creature comforts, nor the Star-light of civil honesty, and common gifts; nor yet the Moon-light of temporary faith, and formal profession, that can make day in the soul, till the Sun of righteousness rise, and shine upon it. And that's the first thing he gives, Light.

Now the second thing he gives, is

Repentance. Repentance is not a Flower that grows in Natures Garden. *Acts* 5. 31. *Him hath God the Father exalted, to be a Prince and a Saviour, so give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.* So in *2 Tim.* 2. 25. *The Servant of the Lord must in meeknesse instruct those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.* By these Scriptures 'tis clear that Repentance is no flower that grows in Natures Garden, though *Armini*ans teach and Print, That if men will put out their power and their strength, they may repent, &c. But several that have been of this Opinion, have experienced the fallenes of it when it hath been too late. *The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the Leopard his spots, Jer.* 13. 23. And certainly, if there were such a power in man to repent, as some would

would make the world believe, man would never miscarry everlastingly, for his not repenting. Oh! is it good dwelling with everlasting burnings, with a devouring fire? is it good being for ever shut out from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power? Certainly if there were such a power in vain man to repent, no man would go to Hell for not repenting; and many that have boasted much of their abilities to repent, when they have been upon a dying bed, would have given a thousand worlds (were there so many in their power) that they could but repent.

Luther confesses, That before his conversion he met not with a more displeasing word in all the study of Divinity, then this word Repent: But after the Lord had converted him, & manifested himself to him, he delighted in this work, then he could sorrow for his sins, & rejoyce in his sorrow.

Repentance strips the soul stark naked of all the garments of the old Adam, and leaves not so much as the shirt behind. In this rotten building there is not one stone left upon another. As the flood drowned Noahs own friends & servants, as well as strangers, so true repentance drowns all darling lusts. True repentance is the cutting off the right hand, and the pulling out of the right eye, and is this such an easie thing? surely no. True Repentance is a gift that is from above, and if the Lord doth not give it, man will eternally perish for the want of it. You may read much more of this, in my Treatise call'd *Heaven on Earth*.

Thirdly, Christ gives his Spirit, *Rom. 8. 5.* The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. So in 1 John 3. ult. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, (how?) by the Spirit which he hath given us. So in Chap. 4. 13. The Spirit that the Lord Christ gives, is an enlightning Spirit, 'tis the Candle of the Lord set up in the hearts of the Saints, to guide them in the way everlasting. 'Tis a sanctifying Spirit, a Spirit of burning, *Isa. 4. 4.* He is a fire to enlighten the soul, and a fire to enliven the soul, and a fire to warm the soul, &c. Whatsoever is of the Spirit is spirit. I is nimble, and lively, and active, and full of life, & motion, as the Spirit is. A man without the Spirit of the

Aut penitendum aut peritundum.

Homo ipsius penitentis, penitere debet. Salv. Penitens de peccato dolet & de dolore gaudet. Luth.

Spiritus sanctus est res delicata. John 14. 26.

Nisi nascuntur a sancto spiritu prodigere potest.

Lord is a dull, dromish creature, as the Latines call a dull, dromish man, a firelesse man. So we may call a man that hath not the Spirit, a spiritlesse man. The Spirit that Christ gives, is a sealing Spirit, *Ephes. 1. 13.* and a leading Spirit, *Rom. 8.* He leads from sin, he leads from wrath, he leads from the curse, he leads to God, he leads to Christ, he leads to the Promises, he leads to glory, &c.

Again, This Spirit is a comforting Spirit, *John 14. 16.* and a pleading Spirit, *Rom. 8. 26.* Every Christian ha's three Advocates pleading for him. The first is that Divine Love that is in the bosome of the Father. The second is the Lord Jesus that is at the right hand of the Father. And the third is the Holy Spirit, that is one with the Father.

Fourthly, He gives his Blood. The Blood of Christ is a gift of Christ to his beloved ones. *Mar. 20. 28.* *The Son of man came not to be ministred unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ranfome for many.* So in *John 10. 11.* *I am the good Shepherd, the good Shepherd giveth his life for his sheep.* His blood was the purest blood, his humane nature being most pure: His blood was the noblest blood, and therefore called in Scripture, The Blood of God, by reason of the conjunction of the Divine Nature with the Humane. It was his life-blood, his heart-blood that he gave. It was not the blood of his finger, but the blood of his heart, it was precious blood.

Three things are called precious in the Scripture.

- 1 Faith is called Precious Faith, *2 Pet. 1. 1.*
- 2 The Promises are called Precious Promises, *ver. 4.*
- 3 The Blood of Christ is called Precious Blood, *1 Pet.*

3. 19.

All your precious mercies swim to you in precious blood, as you may see by comparing the Scriptures in the Margent together.

It was an excellent saying of *Luther*, speaking of this blood of Christ, One little drop of this blood (saith he) is more worth then Heaven and Earth. Your pardon swims to you in blood, your peace swims to you in blood, your reconciliation is made by blood, your acceptation is wrought

There is no
gaining
Demosthenes
words, said
one. So there
is no gain-
ing of the
pleadings of
the Spirit.
Acts. 20. 28.

Rom. 3. 25.

Rom. 5. 9.
Ephes. 1. 7.
Col. 1. 20.
Heb. 9. 7. 26.
Chap. 10. 19.
1 John 1. 7.
Rev. 1. 5. &c.

*Una guttula
plu valet
quam celum
& terra.*
Luther.

wrought by blood, &c. *Sanguis est pretiosus* &c. Christ's blood is Heavens Key. Christ's Blood is a Preservative against the greatest evils. Christ's Blood (as *Pliny* saith of *Tobum*) is a Preservative against Serpents, &c.

Fifthly, Christ gives Pardon of sin, and do you know what a mercy that is? Ask the troubled soul, ask the soul that knowes what it is to lye under the wrath of the Almighty, and he will tell you that pardon of sin is a gift more worth then a thousand worlds. Now that pardon of sin is a gift of God, you may see in *Acts* 5. 31. *Him hath God exalted* * *with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour to give Repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.* So in *Acts* 26. 18. Ah souls! of all mercies pardoning mercy is the most necessary mercy. I may to Heaven without honours, and without riches, and without the smiles of creatures: But I can never to Heaven without pardoning mercy. A man may be great and gracelesse, he may be rich and miserable, he may be honourable and damnable, &c. but he cannot be a pardoned soul, but he must be a very blessed soul. * *Psal.* 32. 1, 2. It intitles souls to all blessedness, it puts the Royal Crown upon their heads. Of all mercies, pardoning mercy is the most sweetning mercy, 'tis a choice jewel, and swims to the soul in blood, *Heb.* 9. 22. 'Tis a mercy that makes all other mercies to look like mercies, and tast like mercies, and work like mercies; and the want of it takes off the glory and beauty of all a mans mercies, and makes his life a very Hell. Pardon of sin is a voluminous mercy, a mercy that ha's many many precious mercies in the womb of it: You may well call it *God*, for it ushers in Troops of mercy. When you can number the sands of the Sea, and tell the Stars of Heaven, then, and not till then shall you be able to recount the mercies that attend pardoning mercy. He that ha's this mercy, cannot be miserable; he that wants it cannot be happy, get this and get all; miss this, and miss all; this is a gift con'er'd only upon Christ's favourites. *So be of good cheer thy sins are forgiven thee.* No mercy will make a man everlastingly merry, below pardoning mercy. He hath no reason to be sad, that hath his

* *ῥῆς ἐκ δεξιᾶς*
270. To his
right hand.
That is, to
honour and
dignity, &c.

As *Abab*, *Ham*,
man, *Drees*,
&c.

* *ἡ εὐλογία*
Blessedness,
in the Plural
Pardon of sin
includes a
plurality of
mercies, a
Chain of
Pearls, a
Chain of
blessings.
Gen. 30. 11.

Mat. 9. 2.

pardon

pardon in his bosome, nor he hath no reason to be glad, who is upon the last step of the Ladder, ready to be turned off without his pardon. And this is the fifth gift that Christ gives to his, *viz.* Pardon of sin.

The Promises are precious beds of Spices, they are *Utrescales*, Bottles filled with those Heavenly dews that will never fail, like that of *Hagar*; but will cherish and nourish the soul to life eternal, &c.

Anochi anochi hu mohbe.

Sixthly, Christ gives Precious Promises, *2 Pet. 1. 4. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promises, &c.* The Promises are a precious Book, every leaf drops Myrrh and mercy. The Promises are golden Vessels that are laden with the choicest Jewels that Heaven can afford, or the soul desire. All our spiritual, temporal, and eternal good, is to be found in the belly of the Promises. Promises are big-bellied mercies, there's nothing you can truly call a mercy, but you will find it in the belly of a Promise; under all changes they are the comfort, support, and relief of the soul. *Psal. 119. 49, 50. Remember thy word unto thy Servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction, for thy word hath quickned me.* If the soul groan under the power of sin, then that Promise relieves it, *Rom. 6. 14. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the Law, but under grace.* If the soul groan under the guilt of sin, then that Promise relieves it, *Jer. 33. 8. I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned against me, &c.* And that Promise: *Isa. 43. 25. I, even I am he that blot out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins. I, even I am he, blotting out thy transgression. I, even I, whom thou hast offended; I, even I, whom thou hast provoked; I, even I, whose glorious name thou hast prophaned; I, even I, whose righteous Law thou hast violated; I, even I, whose holy Covenant thou hast transgressed; I, even I, whose mercies thou hast despised; I, even I, whose Chastisements thou hast slighted, will blot out thy transgressions for my own sake.*

I, even I, is a passionate and emphatical expression. Gods goodnesse runs over to sinful Creatures; and *where sin abounds, there grace doth super-abound.*

If the Creditor himself blot out the debt, and crosse the Book, surely it shall never be remembered more. Our sins are debts, which God who hath the power of life and death

of

Mat. 6, 12. 14,
15. & 18. 24.
27. 33. Luke
7. 41. to 48.

of Heaven and Hell, of condemning and absolving, hath engaged himself to blot out as a thick cloud. *Isa. 44. 22. I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins.* An under Officer may blot out an Indictment, and yet the Offendor may be never the better for it; but if the King, who is the supreme Judge shall blot it out, then the offendor is safe. The Application is easie. If the soul be deserted, then that Promise relieves it, *Nic. 7. 18, 19. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us, &c.* If the soul be sliding, and ready to fall, then that Promise supports and upholds it, *Psal. 37. 24. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.* Or as the Hebrew hath it, *The Lord upholding him with his hand.* The Hebrew Participle (*Somech*) notes a continued act of God. (God hath still his everlasting arms under his people, so that they shall never totally nor finally fall.) And the Root (*Samach*) from whence this word is derived, signifies to sustain or uphold, as the tender Mother doth the little Babe. The safety and security of the Child lyes not so much in the Childs hanging about the Mothers neck, as in the Mothers holding it fast in her arms. So our safety and security lyes not so much in our weak holding upon Christ, but in Christs holding of us fast in his everlasting arms. This is our glory, and our safety, that Christs left hand is alwayes under us, and his right hand does alwayes embrace us, *Cant. 2. 6. If the soul be forsaken by friends, then that Promise relieves it, Heb. 13. 5, 6. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

There are five Negatives in the Greek, to assure Gods people that he will never forsake them. Five times this precious Promise is renewed in the Scripture, that we might have the stronger Consolation, and that we may presse and oppresse it, till we have gotten all the sweetness out of it. And verily, many precious souls have sucked much sweetness out of the breasts of this Promise, when their nearest relations and their dearest friends have forsaken them, and forgotten them. God loves that his people should put his Bonds, his Promises in suit; and he that doth, shall find God

Ki Jehovah
Somech jado.

Deut. 33.
26. 22.

100

God near him, though friends should leave him, and the world be in Arms against him, &c. If the soul be tempted, then that word of Promise relieves it, 1 Cor. 10. 13. *But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, &c.* The Promises are a Christians *Magna Charta*, they are his chief Evidences for Heaven. Men highly prize their Charters and Priviledges, and carefully keep the Conveyances and Assurances of their Lands. Oh! how should Saints then treasure up and keep these Precious Promises, which the Lord hath given them, and which are to them instead of all Assurances, for their Protection, Maintenance, Deliverance, Comfort, and everlasting Happiness? And thus much for the sixth gift the Lord gives; viz. The Promises.

Iohn 1. 16.

Seventhly, The Lord gives Grace. *Of his fullnesse we all have received Grace for Grace.* The Lord gives that grace, the least dram of which is more worth then Heaven and Earth.

Hierom.

A good symbole was attributed to *Emiliu*, the Roman Emperour (*Non gens sed mens, non genus sed genius*) Not race, or place, but grace truly sets forth a man.

Prov. 12. 26.
Gen. 23. 6.

It was an excellent saying of one of the Ancients, I had rather have St. Pauls Coat with his heavenly Graces, then the Purple Robes of Kings, with their Kingdoms. Grace is that which truly enobles the soul, it raises the soul up to converse with the highest and with the noblest objects; & every man is as the objects are, with which he converses. If the objects are noble, the man is so; if the objects are base, with which a man converses, the man is base. A man may better know what he is by eying the objects with which his soul does mostly converse, then by observing his most glorious and pompious services. *The righteous is more excellent then his Neighbour.* Abraham was a Prince of God among the *Hittites*. The *Jews* say, That those seventy persons that went down with *Jacob* into *Egypt*, were more worth then the seventy Nations of the world. Indeed, its only grace that makes a man truly noble.

When one heard the King of *Persia* stil'd The Great King; saith he, I acknowledg none more excellent then my self, unless more righteous; nor none greater, unless better. Grace, as it's bred by the noblest means, so 'tis preserved & maintained in the soul, by the choicest means, viz. Union,

and

and communion with God, &c. Grace is glory in the bud, and glory is grace at the full. Grace makes a man all glorious within and without. Grace is a Ring of gold, and Christ is the sparkling Diamond in that Ring.

Eighthly, He gives Peace, *John 14. 27. My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you.* Christ gives peace with God, and peace with conscience, and peace with the creatures. (*Dulce nomen pacis*) The very name of peace is sweet.

The Hebrews when they wished all happiness to any; used but this one word, *Peace be with you.* And the Ancients were wont to paint Peace in the form of a Woman, with a Horn of plenty in her Hand, all Blessings. Ask a soul that hath been under terrors of conscience, and he will tell you, that of all gifts, inward Peace is the most Princely gift, &c.

Ninthly, He gives Glory, *John 10. 28. My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternall life.* Rom. 7. *The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternall life.*

Now the glory that Christ gives, is Real glory, *2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of glory.* The Greek word (*Apekeitai*) signifies two things. 1 A designation of a Crown. 2 A reservation and safe keeping of it for him untill the Coronation day.

Again, The glory he gives the soul, is soul-filling glory; glory that fills the understanding with the clearest and the brightest light; glory that fills the will with the greatest freedom; glory that fills the affections with the choicest joy and delight.

Again, The glory he gives is incomparable glory, *Rom. 8. 18. I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.* The Greek word (*Logizomai*) that is here rendred *I reckon*, is not a word of doubting, but a word of concluding; I conclude by Arguments, that our present sufferings are not worthy to be compared to that illustrious and glorious glory that is ready to be revealed in us, as 'tis in the Greek. I have cast

Psal. 45. 13.

Rom. 5. 1.
Hof. 2. 21, 22,
23.
Iob 5: 19. to
25.

Martinus the
Emperours
Motto was
(*Pax bello po-
rior*) Give me
peace, and let
others quar-
rel.

α' τον 7ου.

Psal. 16. ult.
Psal. 17. ult.
2 Cor. 12.
1. to 6.

*Percula non
respicit Mar-
tyr, coronas re-
spicit, faith
Basil.*
αὐτὸς ὁ Θεός.
*μενέω, ready
to be ἑστῆς ἡμᾶς.*
on us.

up the account, saith the Apostle, as wise Merchants use to cast up theirs, and I find in the ballancing of the account, that there is nothing to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed.

Again, The glory he gives is Unmoveable glory. All worldly glory is tottering and shaking. Princes. Crowns hang now but upon one side of their heads. *The Lord of Hosts hath purposed it to stain (or pollute) the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honourable of the Earth. The Lord hath purposed it, or as 'tis in the Hebrew. The Lord hath consulted it; And the counsell of the Lord shall stand.* It is agreed upon in Heaven, that the pride of all glory shall be stained and polluted; or thrown down as some polluted filthy thing, that is trampled upon, and trodden under foot. Oh! but this glory that Christ gives, is unmoveable glory, 'tis permanent glory, 'tis glory that cannot be changed, stained, nor polluted.

Again, The glory he gives, is suited glory; 'tis glory that is suited to the backs, hearts, hopes, desires and capacities of his servants.

Again, The glory he gives, is never fading glory, 'tis glory that fadeth not away. When a man hath been in Heaven as many millions of years as there be Stars in Heaven, his glory shall be as fresh and as green, as it was at his first entrance into Heaven. All worldly glory is like the flowers of the field; but the glory that Christ gives is lasting and durable like himself, &c.

Tenthly and lastly, He gives himself; and verily this is a gift of gifts indeed, *John 6. 51. 63.* So in *Ephes. 5. 20.* A Saint may say, me-thinks I hear Christ saying to me, as *Eschines* said to *Socrates*, *Others (said he) give thee silver, and gold, and precious Jewels, but I give thee my self.* So the soul may say, One friend gives me bread, and another gives me cloaths, and another gives me house-room, &c. Oh! but thou givest me thy self. Christ put into the ballance, will out-weigh all other gifts that he bestows upon the Sons of men. Christ is the richest gift. Oh! there are Unsearchable Riches in Christ, as hereafter I shall shew you. He is the

Isa. 25. 9.
73rd
Agnaishah.

Heb. 12. 28.

John 14. 1, 2,
3.

1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.
as a flower which is still fresh and green.
Isa. 40. 6, 7, 8.

Austin prays,
Lord (saith he) whatever thou hast given, take all away, only give me thy self.

the choicest and the rarest gift, he is a gift given but to a few; rich and rare Jewels are not commonly, but more rarely given, so is Christ. Though *Israel* be as the sand of the Sea, yet a Remnant only shall be saved. *A Garden inclosed, a Spring shut up, a fountain sealed, is my well-beloved, Fear not little flock, it is your fathers pleasure so give you a Kingdom.* Christ is a drawing gift, a gift that draws all other gifts along with him. *If he have given us his Son, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* Christ is a drawing gift: When God the father hath cast this incomparable Jewel into a mans bosom, he can't deny him any thing. Such a soul may well say, Hath he given me a Christ? and will he not give me a crum? Hath he given me his Son, which is the greatest mercy? and will he stand with me for lesser mercies? surely no. In a word, Christ is of all gifts, the sweetest gift. As the Tree, *Exod. 15. 25.* sweetned the bitter waters, so this gift, the Lord Jesus (of whom that Tree was a Type) sweetens all other gifts that are bestowed upon the Sons of men; he turns every bitter into sweet, and makes every sweet more sweet.

And so I come to the second thing propounded, and that was

*The Difference between Christs giving,
and the worlds giving.*

And this I shall shew you in the Following Particulars.

First, The world gives, but they give grudgingly: But when Christ gives, he gives freely. *Isa. 55. 1. Oh every one that thirsteth, let him come, and buy wine and milk without money, and without price.* So in *Rev. 21. 6. I will give to every one that is a thirst, of the water of life freely.* To do good, and not to do it freely, handsomly, is nothing. A benefit given with grudging, is a stony loaf, only taken for necessity.

U 2

Secondly,

Rom. 9. 17.

Cant. 4. 12.

Luke 12. 32.

Rom 8. 32. 7

The Difference between Christs and the worlds giving.

2 Cor. 9. 7.
1 Pet. 4. 9.
No Offerings to free-will Offerings.

Saul had but five pence to give the Seer; the Seer after much good cheer gives him no less then the Kingdome, 1 Sam. 9. 8. 10. So God deals with his.

Secondly, The world they give, but they give poorly, niggardly, but Christ gives plenteously, richly, 1 Tim. 6. 17. *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.*

When *Caesar* gave one a great Reward, *This*, saith he, is too great a gift for me to receive; but saith *Caesar*, *I is not too great a gift for me to give.* So though the least gift that Christ gives (in some sense) is too much for us to receive, yet the greatest gifts are not too great for Christ to give.

'Tis said of *Arnanahs*, that Noble *Jehusheer*, renowned for his bounty, *That he had but a subjects purse, but a Kings heart.* But the Lord Jesus hath not only a Kings heart, but he hath also a Kings Purse, and gives accordingly.

Thirdly, The world give, but they give tauntingly, they give upbraidingly; they hit men in the teeth with the gifts they give: I, but the Lord Jesus Christ gives, and he gives willingly, he upbraids none with the gifts he gives, James 1. 5. *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that gives liberally, and upbraiderh no man.* Where Christ gives, there he won't upbraid, neither with present failings, nor former infirmities. Christ is not wont to reproach those to whom he gives the best gifts, he will not cast it in their dish, that he hath been thus and thus kind unto them, but will alwayes rejoyce over them to do them good. But the world gives, and then reproaches the receiver for receiving, and this turns all into gall and wormwood, &c.

Fourthly, The world gives, but they give more rarely, but Christ gives, and he gives frequently; he is every day, every hour, yea, every moment a giving of Royal favours to his people. Here is Peace for you that are in trouble, says Christ; and here is Pardon for you that groan under guilt; sayes Christ; and here is Comfort for you that are Mourners in *Zion*, sayes Christ, &c. His hand is ever in his purse, he is still a scattering Pearls of glory, I, the very Jewels of his Crown, among the beloved of his soul.

Fifthly, The world gives, but they give the worst, and keep the best, I, but Christ gives the best, he gives the best of the

Jer. 32. 40, 41.
Prov. 1. 20.
to 25. Ch. 8. 1.
to 13, & Ch. 9.
1. to 7.

Augustus in his solemn Feasts, gave gold to some, and trifles to others. The Lord gives the gold, the best things to his own, but the trifles of this world, to the men of this world.

the best: he gives the best joy, the best comfort, the best peace, the best love, the best assistance, &c. he gives Adoption, Remission, Justification, Sanctification, Acceptation, Reconciliation, and Glorification, &c. He gives the best: As that King in *Plurarch* said of a Groat, *It is no Kingly gift; and of a Talent, 'Tis no base Bribe.* The world gives Groats, I, but Christ gives Talents.

2 Cor. 9. 15.
1 Pet. 1. 8.
Phil. 4. 7.
Psal. 88. 10, 11.

Sixthly, The world gives a little, that they may give no more: I, but Christ gives, that he may give. He gives a little Grace, that he may give grace upon grace. He gives a little comfort, that he may give fulness of comfort. He gives some sips, that he may give full draughts; he gives pence, that he may give pounds; and he gives pounds that he may give hundreds.

Iohn 1. 16.

The third particular that I am to shew you, is

*The Excellency of those Gifts that
Christ gives, above all other
Gifts that the World
gives.*

In this I shall mind brevity: And

First, The Gifts that Christ gives to his, are Spiritual and Heavenly Gifts: As is most clear by what hath been already said: And the spirituality of them doth demonstrate the excellency of them. And doubtless the more spiritual any gift, any Promise, any truth, any prayer, or any service is, the more excellent is that gift, &c. All Christs gifts are like himself, spiritual and heavenly.

The Excellency of Christs gifts, above all other gifts.

Secondly, They are Pure Gifts: Christ gives wine without water, light without darkness, gold without dross, and sweet without bitter. There's much dross and poyson in the gifts that the world gives, but there's none in the gifts that Christ gives. The streams are as the fountain is, the fountain is pure, and so are the streams; the branches are

Rev. 22. 1.
James 3. 17.

John 15.

as the root is, the root is pure, and so are the branches.

Thirdly, The gifts that Christ gives, are soul-satisfying gifts; they are such as are furable to the soul, and therefore they satisfy the soul. Things satisfy as they sure, there is a good, and there is a furable good, now 'tis only the furable good that satisfies the soul of man. A Pardon is most furable to a condemned man, and therefore it best satisfies him. Health is most furable to the sick, and therefore it satisfies when 'tis attained, &c. As bread satisfies the hungry soul, and drink the thirsty soul, and cloathing the naked soul, so do the precious gifts that Christ bestows upon the soul, satisfy the soul. The light, the love, the joy, the peace, the fellowship, &c. that Christ gives, doth abundantly satisfy the soul. Oh! but the gifts that this world gives, can never satisfy the soul. *Eccles. 5. 10: He that loveth silver, shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance, with increase.* A man may as soon fill a chest with grace, or a quart-pot with virtue, as a heart with wealth. If *Alexander* conquer one world, he will wish for another to conquer.

Fourthly, The gifts that Christ gives, are Most permanent and lasting gifts. The grace he gives is called *Immortal seed*; and the glory he gives is called *everlasting glory*. The gifts of the world are fading; a false Oath, a spark of fire, a storm at Sea, a treacherous friend, brings all to nothing in a moment. Sad experience doth every day confirm this.

Fifthly, and lastly, The gifts that Christ gives, are the most useful gifts. They are useful to the strengthening of the soul against temptations, and to the supporting of the soul under afflictions, and to the sweetening of all changes, health and sickness, strength and weakness, plenty and poverty, honour or disgrace, life or death. Oh but worldly gifts cannot bear up the spirits of men from fainting and sinking, when Tryals come, when troubles come.

Our Modern Stories relate of *Queen Mary*, that she should say, *If they did open her when she was dead, they should find Calice lying at her heart.* The loss of which it seems, halted her end.

The

Ier. 31. 15.

Psal. 90. 14.

Psal. 36. 8.

Psal. 63. 5.

Psal. 65. 4.

The Creature
is all shadow
and vanity,
'tis *filia nollis*,
like *Jonah's*
Gourd, 'tis
now flourish-
ing, and now
dying, &c.

1 John 3. 9.

Rom. 2. 7.

2 Pet. 1. 11.

The Golden
Crown can't
cure the head
ach, nor the
chain of pearl
can't cure the
tooth-ach.

The Prior in *Melancthon* cou'd his hands up and down in a Basin full of Angels, thinking to have charmed his Gour, but it would not do. The precious gifts that Christ gives his, will bear up their heads above all waters, &c. Of all gifts, they are the most usefull for the producing of the most noblest effects; there are no gifts produce such effects, as the precious gifts that Christ gives; they raise men up to much life and activity, they make souls strong to do for God, to bear for God, to suffer for God, to be any thing, to be nothing, that God may be all in all. They raise the strongest joy, the most lasting comfort, and the purest peace. There's no gifts draw out that Thankfulness, and raise up to that Fruitfulness, as the gifts that Jesus Christ gives. And so much for that third Head; viz. *The Excellency of those gifts that Christ gives, above all other gifts whatsoever.*

I come now to the fourth Head, and that is

The Reasons why God gives his best Gifts to his Dearest ones.

I shall only give you these six.

First, *Because he loves them with the dearest, with the choicest, and with the strongest love; therefore he gives them the best gifts.*

Christ doth not love believers with a low, flat, dull, common love, with such a love as most men love one another with, but with a love that is like himself. Now men will give as they love, 1 Sam. 1. 4, 5. And Elkanah gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her Sons and Daughters, Portion, but unto Hinnah he gave a worthy Portion, for he loved her. In the Hebrew it is, *He gave her a gift of the face*: That is, a great, an honourable gift. Men look upon great and honourable gifts, with a sweet and cheerful countenance: So the gifts that Jesus Christ gives to believers, are gifts of the face, that is, they are the greatest gifts, the honourablest gifts, the

*Yissen menah
abbath appa-
jim.*

*Mundus cecidit
verget, & pe-
nentes cum sunt
Canes. The
world is a
Carcase, and
those that
hunt after it
are Dogs, is
an Arabick
Proverb.*

Wicked men
are only
principled to
abuse mercy,
which occasi-
ons God so
often to rain
Hell out of
Heaven upon
them, as he
did once up-
on *Sodome*
and *Gomorrah*,
for abusing of
mercy.

Gen. 25. 5.

Gen. 24. 53.

the choicest gifts, gifts fit for none but a King to give. *Augustus* in his solemn Feasts, gave trifles to some, but gold to others. The Lord Jesus scatters the trifles of this world up and down, as *Lucifer* well speaks, *The whole Turkish Empire is but a crust that God throws to a Dogge.* God scatters giftless gifts, viz. the honours, riches, and favours of this world, up and down among the worst of men; but as for his gold, his Spirit, his grace, his Son, his favour, these are Jewels that he only casts into the bosom of Saints, and that because he dearly loves them.

Secondly, *Christ gives the best gifts to his people, because they are best principled and fitted to make a Divine improvement of them.*

There's no men on Earth that are principled and fitted for the improvement of the special gifts that Christ gives, but his own people. None have such Principles of wisdom, love, holiness, and faithfulness, to make an improvement of the joy, the peace, the comfort, that the Lord gives, as his people. *Exge. Abraham gave unto the Sons of the Concubines gifts, and sent them away, but unto Isaac he gave all that he had.* As *Isaac* was better beloved then the Concubines Sons, so *Isaac* was better principled to improve love, then they were. The application is easie.

Thirdly, He doth it upon this account, *That he may the more indear the hearts of his people to him.*

The greatest design of Christ in this world, is mightily to indear the hearts of his people; and indeed it was that which was in his eye, and upon his heart from all eternity. It was this design that caused him to lay down his Crown and to take up our Cross; to put off his Robes, and to put on our Rags; to be condemned, that we might be justified; to undergo the wrath of the Almighty, that we might for ever be in the arms of his mercy. He gives his Spirit, his grace, yea, and his very self and all, to indear the hearts of his people to himself. When *Isaac* would indear the heart of *Rebeckah*, then the Bracelets, the Jewels, and the Ear-rings are cast into her bosom. So the Lord Jesus casts his heavenly Bracelets, Jewels, and Ear-rings, into the bosoms,

into

into the laps of his people, out of a design to indear himself unto them. *Prov. 17. 18. A gift is a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it, whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.* In the Hebrew 'tis thus, *A gift is as a stone of grace,* That is, it makes a man very acceptable and gracious in the eyes of others. A gift is like that precious stone *Pantarbe*, that hath a marvellous confiliating property in it: Or like the wonder-working *Load-stone*, that as some Writers observe, hath among other Properties this, That it makes those that have it, wel-spoken men, and well accepted of Princes. Certainly the gifts that Jesus Christ gives to his, do render him very acceptable and precious in their eyes. Christ to them is the Crown of Crowns, the Heaven of Heaven, the Glory of Glories, he is the most sparkling Diamond in the Ring of glory, *Prov. 18. 16. A mans gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.* The gifts that Jesus Christ gives widen the heart, and enlarge the soul of a Believer; so take in more of himself. Naturally we are narrow-mouthed Heaven-ward, and wide-mouthed Earth-ward, but the Lord Jesus by calling in his Jewels, his Pearls, his precious gifts into the soul, doth widen the soul, and enlarge the soul, and make it more capacious to entertain himself. Christ by his gifts causes all doors to stand open, *That the King of glory may enter in.*

Now the fourth Reason of the Point is, *Because Christ expects more from his people, then he doth from all the world besides, therefore he gives them the best gifts.*

Where the Lord expects and looks for most, there he gives most. Though believers are but *A little little flock*, though they are but *A Remnant*, though they are but *A Fountain sealed*, *A spring shut up*, *A Garden inclosed*, yet Christ looks for more from them, then from all the world besides. He looks for more love from them, then from all the world besides, and he expects more service from them, then from all the world besides; and he looks for more honour from them, then from all the world besides, *Mal. 1. 6. A Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Master? If I am your Father, where is my honour? And if I am your Master, where is my fear? He*

X

looks

מלכ

Psal. 24. 7. to 10.

'Twas a good saying of Justin Martyr, Non in verbis, sed in factis vestrae religionis consistunt. God loves (saith Luther) Curristas, not Quarists, The runner, not the questioner, &c.

Some say, that the Panther will leap 3 times after his prey, but if he misse it the third time, he will leap no more.

'Twere well for Saints, if Satan would doe so, &c.
1 Chr. 21. 1.
Iob 2. 9.
Mat. 26.
2 Cor. 12. 7.
Mat. 4. 1. to 12.
Acts 20. 23.

Vigilans Diabolus & tu dormis. The Devil watcheth, and doest thou sleep?

Ego non sum ego, said that Noble Convert, when he met with a temptation.

looks for more fear from them, then from all the world besides; and for more honour from them, then from all the world besides; and for more prayers and praises from them, then from all the world besides.

Fifthly, *The Lord Jesus gives the best gifts to his own people, That he may save and strengthen them against the worst temptations.*

There are no men on Earth that lye open to temptations, as Saints; the best men have been always the most tempted. The more excellent any man is in grace and holiness, the more shall that man be followed with temptations, as you may see in *David*, who was tempted by Satan to number the people; and *Job*, to curse God, and dye; and *Peter*, to deny Christ; and so *Paul* was buffeted; yea, and Christ himself most grievously assaulted. The Lord knows well enough, that Satan hath a cruel eye, an envious eye, a malicious eye upon his beloved ones, and therefore he is pleased by his precious gifts, to strengthen them against his assaults. What *Paul* once said concerning bonds and afflictions, that they attended him in every place, that may believers say concerning temptations, that they attend them in every place, in every calling, in every condition, in every company, in every service, &c. As now, that the hearts of his people and temptations may not meet, the Lord is pleased to give them the best and choycest gifts.

Austin thank God for this, That his heart and the temptations did not meet. The Lord hath on purpose given these glorious gifts into the hearts of his Saints, that their souls and temptations may be kept asunder; that though they be tempted, yet they may not be conquered; though they be assaulted, yet they may not be vanquished. *Basil*, *Luther*, *Vincentius*, and that famous Marquess *Galiatus*, &c. met with very strange and strong temptations, but the precious gifts that the Lord had cast into their bosoms, made them triumph over all. Oh that grace, that peace, that life, that love, that communion with which the Lord had crowned them, made them too great, too noble, and too glorious, to yield to any temptations with which they were beset.

'Twas

'Twas their pleasure to overcome offered pleasure, their honour to overcome offered honour, their greatness to overcome offered greatness. When one of them was tempted with money and preferment, he scorned the offers, saying, Give me money that may last for ever, and glory that may eternally flourish.

Jerome tells a story of a Christian Souldier, whom when the Pretor could not by any torments remove from Christianity, he commanded to be laid on a bed in a pleasant Garden, among the flourishing & fragrant flowers; which done, all others withdrawing, a most beautiful Harlot come to him, and used all Art to destroy his soul; but the Christian Souldier being filled with the Royal gifts of the Spirit, bit off his tongue with his teeth, and spat it in her face as she was tempting him, and so got victory over all her temptations.

The precious favours God confers upon his, make them temptation-proof, they make believers trample upon the most amiable baits. *How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?* says *Joseph*. *Josephs* sense of *Potiphar's* favours heaped upon him, strengthened him against the impudent solicitations of his wanton Mistresses. And shall not the singular favours that God confers upon his dearest ones, strengthen them against Satans assaults? Surely gracious hearts are wrought more upon, & bettered & strengthened more by spirituals, then by temporals; by eternals, then by externals; & if Satan do not find it so, I am much mistaken.

Well, Remember this, Satans overcoming the Saints, gives him the greatest advantage to boast and triumph over Christ.

Amorose brings in the Devil boasting against Christ, and challenging *Indas* as his own, He is not thine, Lord Jesus (saith he) he is mine, his thoughts beat for me; he eats with thee, but he is fed by me; he takes bread from thee, but money from me; he drinks with thee, but sells thy blood to me. So when Satan prevails over the Saints; Look, Oh Christ! (says he) are these the price of thy blood? are these the objects of thy love? are these the delight of thy soul? what,

*Pecuniam da-
que permanet
ac continus da-
ret gloriam
que semper flo-
reat. Basil.*

*Hieronymus in
vita Pauli.*

Gen. 39.

The Devil
marcheth
well armed,
and in good
array, saith
Luther.

are these thy Jewels? are these the Apple of thy eye? Are these thy pleasant portion? Why, Lo how I lead them! Lo how I triumph over them! they seem rather to be mine, then thine. Ah Christians! resist as for life, that Satan may never have occasion thus to insult and triumph over Christ, &c.

Sixthly and lastly, Christ gives the best gifts to his dearest ones. That they may be an honour and a praise unto him in the glorious day of his owning of them, and marriage to them before all the world.

Hof. 2.19, 20.

The good things of eternal life are so many that they exceed number, so great that they exceed measure, so precious that they are above all estimation. Aug. de Triplici habund. 4.

Believers in this life are but betrothed to Christ, I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgement, and in loving-kindness. Their Marriage-day is put off till the glorious day of Christs appearing; the great day of his glory, will be the day of solemnity, Rev. 21. 2. 9, 10. compared. It would not be for the honour and glory of Christ, that his Spouse in that day should be cloathed with rags, therefore he hath given them the Bracelets, the Ear-rings, and the Jewels before hand that they may be a praise and an honour to him, in the Marriage-day. Oh! when the Saints shall appear with all those glorious Jewels about them, that Christ hath bequeathed to them, how will their splendant glory darken all other glory, and make the very Sun to hide its face? This is our betrothing day, that will be our Marriage day.

Bishop Ridley, the night before he suffered, invited his Hostess, and the rest at Table to his Marriage. For, said he, to morrow I must be married. So several other Martyrs went as merrily to dye, as to dine; knowing that their dying day did but make way for their Marriage day. The Lord doth by his rich and royal favours, trick and trim up his Bride before hand, that she may be an honour and a praise to him in the day of Coronation, in the day of Marriage, in the day of solemnity, when he will own her before Devils, Angels, and all Reprobates; when he will say, Lo here am I, and the Bride, O Father! that thou hast given me.

And thus you have a brief account of the Reasons of the Point, why the Lord gives the best gifts to his own people.

We

We shall make some short, but sweet Uses of this Point.

And first,

Doth the Lord give the best and greatest gifts to his people?

Then you that are his people, sit down and wonder at this condescending Love of God.

Oh! what's in thy soul, or in my soul, that should cause the Lord to give such gifts to us, as he hath given? We were all equal in sin and misery; nay doubtless, we have actually outsin'd thousands, to whom these precious gifts are deny'd. Let us therefore sit down and wonder at this condescending love of God. Oh! we were once poor wretches sitting upon the dunghil, yea, wallowing in our blood, and yet behold the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, hath so far condescended in his love, as to bestow himself, his Spirit, his grace, and all the Jewels of his Royal Crown upon us. Oh! what heart can conceive, what tongue can express this matchless love? I will be thine for ever, says Christ, and my Spirit shall be thine for ever, and my grace thine for ever, and my glory thine for ever, and my righteousness thine for ever; all I am, and all I have, shall be thine for ever. Oh Sirs! what condescending love is this? what a Christ is this?

But then secondly, *Be greatly thankful, O be greatly thankful for the great gifts that Christ hath bestowed upon you.*

It is not a little thankfulness that will answer and suit to the great gifts that the Lord Jesus hath bestowed upon you. O say with the Psalmist, *When shall I render to the Lord for all his favours, and great benefits: I will take the cup of salvation, and will call upon the name of the Lord.* Yea say again with the Psalmist, *I will praise thee more and more.* Or as 'tis in the Hebrew, *I will add to thy praise.* O when thou lookest upon the Jewels, the Pearls that Christ hath given thee, say, Lord I will praise thee more and more, I will rise higher and higher in thy praises; I will be still adding to thy praise. The very Law of Nature bespeaks great thankfulness, where great favours are given; and the Law of Custom bespeaks it, and doth not the Law of grace bespeak it much more?

Ezek. 16.

O Lord Iesus,
saith Bernard,
(breaking
forth into an
admiration of
Christ's love)
I love thee,
(*Plusquam
mea, plusquam
meum, plusquam
meum*) more
then all my
Goods, more
then all my
friends, yea,
more then
my very self,
&c.

Psal. 103.

Psal. 71. 14.
Injuries shall
be writ in the
dust, but our
mercies on
Marble, that
our hearts
may be the
better pro-
vokt to praise
and thankfull

When

Turk's Hist.
226. &c.

There are but
few upon
whom God
bestoweth his
love.

'Twas always
a principle in
morality, that
sweet and in-
timate friend-
ship can't be
extended to
many friends
usually go by
pairs.

When *Tamerlin* had taken *Prinace*, among other Questions he askt him if ever he had given God thanks for making him so great an Emperour? He contest immediately, That he never thought of that: To whom *Tamerlin* replied, 'Tis no wonder so ungrateful a man should be made a spectacle of misery. Oh! what do they then deserve, that are unthankful for spiritual favours? Tell me, O Christians! are not the gifts that Christ hath conferred upon you, peculiar gifts? And will you not be thankful for them? Were they but common gifts, you ought to be thankful for them, how much more then for peculiar gifts, for right-handed favours? Tell me, are not the gifts that Christ hath given thee, rare gifts? What hadst thou been if Christ had not made a difference between thee and others, by those glorious gifts that he hath conferred upon thee? Thou lookest upon some, and seest they are very ignorant, O! what hadst thou been, if God had not bestowed that grace of knowledge upon thee? Thou lookest upon other persons that are unclean, prophane, and filthy, why, such a wretch wouldst thou have been, if the Lord had not made a difference between thee and them, by bestowing himself, his grace and Spirit upon thee.

It was long since determined in the Schools, That penitents had more reason to be thankful then iniquities; for giving an advantage to mercy to be doubly free in giving, and in pardoning: And so the greater obligation is left upon us to thankfulness.

Luther hath a very famous story, in his writing upon the fourth Commandement, in the time of the Council of *Constance*; he tels you of two Cardinals, that as they were riding to the Council, they saw a Shepherd in the field weeping, one of them being affected with his weeping, rood to him to comfort him; & coming near to him he desired to know the reason of his weeping; the Shepherd was unwilling to tell him at first, but at last he told him, saying, I looking upon this Toad considered that I never praised God as I ought, for making me such an excellent Creature as a man comely and reasonable. I have not blessed him that he made me not such a deformed Toad as this. The Cardinall hearing this and considering

considering that God had done far greater things for him, then for this poor Shepherd, he fell down dead from his Mule; his servants lifting him up, and bringing him to the City, he came to life again, and then cryed out, *O Saint Austin! how truly didst thou say, The unlearned rise and take Heaven by force, and we with all our learning wallow in flesh and blood. The application is easie.*

Thirdly, The next life is,

If the Lord hath given the best gifts to his people, then O that his people would not give God the worst, but the best of every thing!

O! I give the Lord the best of your strength, the best of your time, the best of your mercies, and the best of your services, who hath given to your souls the best of gifts, *Numb. 18. 29. Out of all your gifts ye shall offer every Heave-Offering of the Lord, of all the best thereof, even the hallowed part thereof out of it.* So I say, of all thy Offerings offer God the best, who hath given to thee the best and greatest gifts. So in *Exod. 35. 22. For the service of the Tabernacle they brought bracelets, and ear-rings, and rings, and tables, all Jewels of gold; and every man that offered, offered an Offering of gold unto the Lord.* They gave the best of the best, and so must we. O do not offer to God the worst of your time, the worst of your strength, the worst of your mercies, the worst of your services. That same is a very dreadful Text. *Mal. 1. 8, 13, 14. compared. And if ye offer the blind for Sacrifice, is it not evill? And if ye offer the lame and the sick, is it not evill? Offer it now unto thy Governour, will he be pleased with it, and accept thy person? saith the Lord of Hosts. Saith God, will men be put off thus? No, I know they won't, and why then should you deal worse with me, then with men? Thy Governours will have the best, I, the best of the best, and will you deal worse with me, saith God, then with your Governours? Will you thus require me for all my favours, O foolish people and unwise? is this your kindness to your friend? *Vers. 13, 14. He said also, behold what a weariness is it? and ye have sinned at it, saith the Lord of Hosts. And ye have brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick, thus ye brought an Offering;**

'Tis the most wicked avarice, to defraud God of the Oblation of our selves, saith Chrysost.

If a man should serve the Lord a thousand years (saith Austin) it would not deserve an hour of the reward in Heaven, no not a moment, much lesse an Eternity: And therefore (sayes he) we had need do as much as we can, and do all that we do as well as we can, &c.

should

Should I accept this of your hands, saith the Lord (Oh! that God had not cause to complain thus of many of your souls, to whom he hath shown much love.) But mark what follows, Vers. 14. But cursed be the Deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing; for I am a great King, saith the Lord of Hosts, and my name is dreadful among the Heathen. If you have better in your hands, and yet shall go to put off God with the worst, the curse will follow. Think of it and tremble, all you that deal fraudulently and falf-heartedly with God. Ah Christians! you must say, world stand behind, sin and Satan get you behind us, for the best gifts, the choicest favours that ever were given, we have received from the father of light; and therefore by his gifts he hath obliged our souls to give him the best of our time, strength, and services; and therefore we will not be at your call or beck any longer. Oh say! the Lord hath given us the best gifts, and Cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing.

Fourthly,

This should bespeak the people of God to trust and lean upon God for lesser gifts.

Hath God given thee a Crown, and wilt thou not trust him for a crum? Hath he given thee a house that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God? Hath he given thee a Kingdome that shakes not? And wilt thou not trust him for a Cottage, for a little house-room in this world? Hath he given thee Himself, his Son, his Spirit, his Grace, and wilt thou not trust him to give thee bread, and friends, and cloaths, and other necessary mercies that he knows thou needest? Hath he given thee the greater, and will he stand with thee for the lesser? Surely no. Wilt thou trust that man for much, that hath given thee but a little? And wilt thou not trust that God for a little, that hath given thee much? Wilt thou not trust him for pence, that hath given thee pounds? Oh Sirs! hath the Lord given you himself, the best of favours, and will not you trust him for the least favours? Hath he given you Pearls, and will not you trust him

2 Tim. 4. 8.

Heb. 11. 15.

Chap. 12. 28.

Rom. 8. 32.

Mat. 6. 32.

him for pins? &c. Doth not the Apostle argue sweetly? *Rom. 8. 32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also, freely give us all things?* What? sayes the Apostle, hath he given us his Son, his only Son, his bosom Son, his beloved Son, the Son of his joy, the Son of his delights? Oh how can he then but cast in all other things, as paper and pack-thread, into the bargain? Oh! that Christians would learn to reason themselves out of their fears, and out of their distrusts, as the Apostle doth! Oh! that Christians would no longer rend and wrack their precious souls, with fears and cares, but rest satisfied in this, That he that hath been so kind to them in spirituals, will not be wanting to them in temporals.

Fifthly,

If the Lord hath given the best gifts to his people, this should then bespeak his people, not to envy the men of the world, for those lesser favours that God hath confer'd upon them.

It was horrid wickedness in *Ahab*, to envy poor *Naboth*, because of his Vineyard: And is it a virtue in you that are Christians, to envy others, because their outward mercies are greater or sweeter then yours? Should the Prince, upon whose head the Royal Crown is set, and about whose neck the golden Chain is put, envy those whose hands are full of Sugar-plums, and whose laps are full of Rosemary, &c. Hath not God, Oh Christians! put a Royal Crown of glory upon your heads, and a golden Chain of grace about your necks, and his Sons glorious Robe upon your backs? and why then should your hearts rise against others mercies? Oh! reason your selves out of this sinful temper.

I would have every Christian thus to argue, Hath not the Lord given me himself? Is not one dram of that grace that God hath given me, more worth then ten thousand worlds? and why then should I envy at others mercies?

There was a Souldier, which for breaking his rank in reaching after a Bunch of Grapes, was condemned to dye (by Martial Law) and as he went to Execution, he went eating of his Grapes; upon which, some of his fellow Souldiers were somewhat troubled, saying, *He ought then to mind*

Prov. 8. 23. to 32. Vide Mat 3. ult.

Tantum possumus, quantum credimus. Cyp.

David three several times gives himself this counsel, Not to envy at others. Psa. 37. 1. 7. 8. compared. So Psa. 73. 21.

some what else: To whom he said, I beseech you Sirs do not envy me, my Grapes they will cost me dear; you would be loath to have them at the rate that I must pay for them. So say I, Oh Saints! do not envy the men of this world, because of their honours riches, &c. for you would be loath to have them at that rate that they must pay for them. Oh! there is a day of reckoning a coming, a day wherein all the Nobles and brave Gallants in the world, must be brought to the bar, and give an account how they have improved and employed all the favours that God hath confer'd upon them; therefore envy them not. Is it madness and folly in a great Favourite at Court, to envy those that fast themselves with the scraps that come from the Princes Table? O then what madness and folly is it, that the favourites of Heaven should envy the men of the world, who at best do but feed upon the scraps that come from Gods Table? Spirituals are the choice meat, temporals are but the scraps. Temporals are the bones, spirituals are the marrow.

Is it below a man to envy the dogs, because of the bones? And is it not much more below a Christian to envy others for temporals, when himself enjoyes spirituals?

Sixthly,

Be not troubled for the want of lesser gifts.

It is to me a sad thing to see gracious souls (that have some comfortable satisfaction in their own hearts, that the Lord hath given Christ and grace to them, &c.) go up and down whining and weeping, because they have not health, or wealth, or Child, or Trade, &c. when the Lord hath bestowed upon them such choice, spiritual blessings, the least of which will outweigh all temporal blessings. Well Christians, remember this, you are below your spiritual birth, your holy calling, when you suffer your hearts to be troubled & perplexed for the want of temporal things. Can you read special love in these? Doth your happiness lye in the enjoyment of them? Are not the Angels happy without them? Was not Lazarus more happy then Dives? Yes. O then let not the want of those things trouble thee, the in-

John 14.12, 23.

joyment of which can never make thee happy. Should the Child be troubled for want of a Rattle, or a Baby, that is proclaimed Heir of a Crown? And why then should a Christian, that is Heir apparent to a Heavenly Crown, be troubled upon the want of worldly toys? &c.

Jerom tells us of one *Didymus*, a godly Preacher, who was blind, *Alexander* a godly man coming to him, askt him, whether he was not fore troubled and afflicted for want of his sight? O yes, said *Didymus*, it's a great affliction and trouble to me: Then *Alexander* chid him, saying, Hath God given you the excellency of an Angel, of an Apostle, and are you troubled for that which Rats and Mice, and Bruit-beasts have?

'Tis great folly, 'tis double iniquity, for a Christian to be troubled for the want of those things that God ordinarily bestowes upon the worst of men. Oh the mercies that a Christian hath in hand! Oh the mercies that a Christian hath in the Promises! Oh the mercies that a Christian hath in hope! are so many, so precious, and so glorious, that they should bear up his head and heart from fainting and sinking under all outward wants.

There goes a story among Scholars, of *Aesop's* deceiving *Mercury*, he having promised him one part of his Nuts, keeps all the meat to himself, and gives the other the shells. Ah Christians! God hath given you the meat, but the world the shells, why then should you be troubled for want of the shells when God hath given you the kernel? &c.

Seventhly.

If the Lord hath given his people the best gifts, Oh then let not them leave off that God that hath bestowed such choyce and noble favours on them.

Jer. 2. 11, 12, 13. Hath a Nation changed their Gods, which are yet no Gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit: Be astonished O ye Heavens at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. (Why?) For my people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, &c. This was that aggravated the Israelites sin; Psal. 105. & 106. That they forsook

Y 2

Scotus, Sch.
l.4.c.20.

Cyprian in his Sermon, Delapsis reports of divers, who for forsaking the Lord, were given over to evil spirits, and died carnally. A backslider may say, Opera & impensaria. All my pains and charge is lost.

that God that had confer'd upon them many rich and royal favours. But O then what madnesse and folly is it in you, that you should forsake that God that hath done such mighty things for your souls? I may say to keep you close to God, as *Saul* said to his servants, to keep them close to him, 1 *Samuel* 22. 7. Then *Saul* said unto his servants that stood about them, hear now ye *Benjamites* will the Son of *Jesse* give every one of you fields and Vineyards, and make you all Captains of thousands, and Captaines of hundreds? Ah Christians! can the world give you spiritual life? Can the world give you peace of conscience, pardon of sin, the favour of God, the hopes of glory? No, O then never leave nor forsake that God that hath given you all these Royal favours, which none can give nor take, but himself. He that forsakes God, forsakes his own mercies, he forsakes his life, his joy, his Crown, his all in all.

No evil to this, of forsaking the greatest good. It makes a mans life a very Hell. Such shall be written in the dust, Jer.

17. 13.

Eighthly and lastly,

Be not impatient nor froward, when God shall take away some lesser mercies from you.

Hath God given you the best, and the greatest gifts that your souls can beg, or himself can give? And will you be froward or impatient when he shall come to take away lesser mercies? What? wilt thou be an impatient soul, when God comes and writes death upon such a near mercy, and passes the sentence of death upon such and such desirable mercies? Verily this is the way to provoke God to strip thee naked of thy choicest Ornaments, and to put thee in chains, or else to turn thee a graising among the beasts of the field, as he did *Nebuchadnezzar*. God gives the best, and takes away the worst; he gives the greatest, and takes away the least; the sense of which made *Job* bless God, when stript of all. If a man should give you a Pearl, and take away a Pin; if he should give you a bagge

of

Diis proximus ille est, quem ratio non ira movet. Sen. He is next to God, whom reason, and not anger, moveth. Did an impatient soul but see himself in a glasse, he would loath himself, for saith Homer, his eyes sparkle like fire, his heart swels, his pulse beats, &c. In a word, an im-

of gold, and take away a bag of counters, would it not be a madnesse in you to be impatient, and froward? Doth God take away a pin, and hath he not given you a Pearl for it? He hath given thee a pound, O Christian, for every penny that he hath taken from thee, therefore be not froward, nor impatient. Remember Christians, how many in the world there be, that sit sighing and mourning under the want of those very favours that you do enjoy. *Why does the living man complain?* What, out of the grave, and complain? What, out of Hell, and complain? This is mans sin, and Gods wonder.

But now some poor sinners may say, Here's good News for Saints, but what is all this to us all this while?

Why, I'll tell you, I have something to say for the comfort and encouragement of poor sinners. Ah sinners! Christ is willing to bestow the best gifts upon the worst sinners. Take one Text for all, 'tis a sweet one, and full to the point in hand, *Psal. 68. 18. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.*

Christ hath received gifts as a Steward from the hand of the father, to dispence them among men, yea among the rebellious, the worst of men. If there be here at this time any rebellious sinner, or rebellious Sabbath-breaker, or rebellious drunkard, or rebellious curser, &c. let such rebellious sinners know, that Christ hath received gifts, *even for the rebellious.*

That the Lord God might dwell amongst them. That is, that the Lord God might have sweet fellowship and communion with them. *Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voyce, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

Behold I stand at the door and knock. I, that have Heaven to give, and peace to give, and pardon to give, and grace to give, and my self to give; I that have tryed gold to enrich you, and white rayment to cloath you, and eye-salve to anoint you. *I stand at the door and knock, if any man will*

open

patient soul is a Bedlam, a Monstier, a Devil, &c.

Read also
Pro. 1. 26. to
29. Chap. 8. 1.
to 8. & Chap.
9. 1. to 7. 11a.
43. 22, 23, 24.
35. 1er. 51. 5.

None so faith-
ful as Christ,
Heb. 3. 5, 6.

Rev. 3. 20.
2 Cor. 6. 16.
*I will dwell in
them. The
words are ve-
ry significant
in the Orig-
inal, *ἐνοικησέ-
ναι αὐτοῖς*; I
will indwell in
them. There
are two in's
in the Orig-
inal, as if God
could never
have enough
communion
with them.*

open the door, let him be never so guilty, never so filthy, never so unworthy, &c. *I will come in and sup with him, and he with me.*

Lord, at whose door dost thou stand knocking? Is it at the rich mans door? Or at the righteous mans door? Or at the humbled mans door? Or at the weary and heavy laden mans door? Or at the mourners door? Or at the qualified or prepared mans door? No, sayes Christ, 'tis at none of these doors. At whose then, O blessed Lord? At the luke-warm *Laodiceans* door, at their door that are neither hot nor cold, that are *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* These, sayes Christ, are the worst of the worst; and yet if any of these wretches, these Monsters of mankind, will open the door, *I will come in, and will sup with them, and they with me.*

Bodin relates
this story.

I have read a remarkable story of a great Rebel, that had raised a mighty party against a *Roman* Emperour: The Emperour upon this being much provoked and stir'd in spirit, made a Proclamation, That whosoever brought in the Rebel dead or alive, should have a great sum of money. The Rebel hearing of this, comes and presents himself unto the Emperour, and demanded of him the sum of money. Whereupon the Emperour reasons thus, *If I should now cut him off, the world would say, I did it to save my money;* and so he pardoned him, and gave him the great sum of money, notwithstanding all his former rebellion.

Oh! shall a Heathen Emperour do thus to a Rebel that was in Arms against him? And will not God do as much for poor Rebellious sinners? Surely he will. What though thou hast been in Arms against God, and mustered up all the strength and force thou couldst, even all the members of thy body, and faculties of thy soul, against God, and Christ, and Holiness? Yet know that the King of *Israel* is a merciful King, he is a God of pardons, he delights to make his grace glorious, and therefore is very willing to shew mercy to the greatest Rebels, to the worst of sinners; witness *Manasseh, Mary Magdalen, the Thief, Paul, and others.* The greatness of mans sins, do but set off the riches of free grace.

Rom. 5. 10.

Col. 1. 21.

Rom. 6. 13.

Ec. 19. 20.

grace. Sins are debts, and God can as easily blot out a debt of many thousands, as he can a lesser debt; therefore let not the greatest Rebel despair, but believe, and he shall find, that *where sin hath abounded, there grace shall super-abound*, &c.

And thus much for this Observation. We shall now proceed to the next words, *Viz.*

EPHES.

EPHES. 3. 8.

That I should Preach among the Gentiles the Unsearchable Riches of Christ.

Little to open the words.

That I should Preach.

Εὐαγγέλιον. Ευαγγελιστή, from Ευαγγελίζο.

That is declare good News, or the glad tidings of salvation, that's brought by Jesus Christ to sinners. The Greek word Ευαγγελιστής, in the New Testament, answers to the Hebrew word *Bessrah*, in the Old Testament, both signifying good News, glad tidings, or a joyful Message.

That I should Preach among the Gentiles.

ἔθνη.

The word that is here rendred *Gentiles*, is sometimes used generally for all men, or all Nations. So 'tis used in *Mat.* 25. 32. *Mat.* 28. 19. Sometimes this Greek word is used more especially for the people of the *Jews*. So in *John* 11. 48, 50, 51, 52. *Mat.* 10. 22. And sometimes it is used for the *Gentiles*, distinguished from the *Jews*, so in *Mat.* 6. 32.

Phil. 2. 12, 13.

By the *Gentiles* here you are to understand those poor Heathens that were without God in the world, that never had heard of Christ, nor those Unsearchable Riches that be in him; as you may clearly see by comparing this Text with that, *Gal.* 1. 15, 16. *But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mothers womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach among the Heathen.* (Saith he)

he) immediately I consulted not with flesh and blood.

The first Observation that I shall speak to, from these words thus opened, is this.

That the Gifts and Graces that God bestows upon his people, should be improved, imployed, and exercised by his people.

The Greek word *Caris*, that is here rendred *Grace*, we shewed you had a three-fold signification in the Scripture. Sometimes it denotes the favour of God; sometimes the common gifts of the Spirit, and sometimes the saving graces of the Spirit. Now, sayes *Paul*, that singular favour that God hath confer'd upon me, and all those common gifts and special graces with which he ha's enriched me, they are all to be imployed and exercised. *Unto me is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles, the Unsearchable Riches of Christ.*

So that there is nothing more clear then this, *viz.* That the gifts and graces that God bestowes upon his people, should be imployed, improved, and exercised by his people.

To me is this Grace given. Not that I should be idle, but active; not that I should be negligent, but diligent; not that I should hide my Talents, but improve them.

I shall touch upon a few Scriptures that speak out this Truth, and then open it to you. *2 Tim. 1. 6. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God that is in thee.* As the fire is increased and preserved by blowing, so are our graces. Some think that 'tis a metaphor taken from a spark kept in ashes, which by gentle blowing is stirred up, till it take a flame. Others say, 'tis an allusion to the fire in the Temple, which was always to be kept burning. We get nothing by dead & useles habits, Talents hid in a napkin, gather rust; the noblest faculties are imbas'd, when not improved, when not exercised. *Phil. 2. 12. Work out your*

Calvin, and others.

κατὰ γὰρ τὸ μέτρον
καὶ οὐ κατὰ τὴν ἐξουσίαν.

own salvation with fear and trembling. The Greek is, *Work till you get the work through.* The reason why many mens hearts tremble, and are so full of fears and doubts, is because their salvation is not wrought out, they do not make through work in their souls, they put not that Question home, Whether they have grace, or no, an interest in Christ, or no. They do not rise with all their strength against sin, nor with all their power to serve the Lord, and therefore fears and doubts do compass them round about. So in 1 Cor. 15. ult. *Be steadfast, and unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

Grace is bettered & made more perfect by acting. Neglect of our graces, is the ground of their decrease and decay. Wells are the sweeter for drawing.

Be steadfast. 'Tis a Metaphor taken from a foundation, on which a thing stands firmly; or a seat, or chair, wherein one sits fast.

Unmoveable, signifies one that will not easily move his place, or opinion.

Abounding, or excelling in the work of the Lord.

Knowing that your labour is not in vain. The Greek is, *Labour's unto weariness.* The Apostle would have them labour unto weariness; For (saith he) 'tis not in vain. It will turn to a good account, it will yield you much of Heaven here, and make you high in Heaven hereafter.

There are only two things that I shall endeavour to do, for the opening of the Point.

- 1 To shew you why persons must improve, imploy, and exercise the graces and gifts that God hath bestowed upon them. And then
- 2 The End to which they are to exercise those graces and gifts.

For the first, There are these twelve Reasons why gracious souls should exercise and improve their gifts and graces. Friends, this Point is a Point of as singular use, and of as great concernment to you, as any that I know the Scripture speaks of, and therefore I desire you to lend your most serious and solemn attentions.

First; They must exercise and improve their graces, Because the exercise and improvement of their graces is the

the ready way to be rich in grace.

As sin is increased in the soul by the frequent actings of it, so grace is nourished and strengthened in the soul by its frequent actings. The exercise of grace is alwayes attended with the increase of grace. *Prov. 10. 4. The diligent hand maketh rich;* or, the nimble hand, the hand that's active and agile, that will see nothing lost for looking after, that hand maketh rich. *Ruth 2.* how did Boaz follow the businesse himself? his eyes were in every corner, on the servants, and on the Reapers, yea, on the Gleaners too.

It is recorded of *Severus*, That his care was not to look what men said of him, or how they censured him, but to look what was to be done by him. He will rise in judgement against those Professors that look more what this man, and the other man saith of them, then what is to be done by them. The heart of a Christian is to be taken up with what is to be done by him, and not with what this man thinks, or the other judges of him.

Pacuvius hath an elegant saying, *I hate (saith he) the men that are idle in deed, and Philosophical in word.* God loves (saith *Luther*) *Curristas*, not *Quaristas*, The runner, not the questioner. Grace grows by exercise, and decays by disuse. Though both arms grow, yet that which a man most useth, is the stronger and the bigger; so it is both in gifts and graces. In Birds, their wings which have been used most, are sweetest; the Application is easie. Such men as are contented with so much grace as will bring them to glory, with so much grace as will keep Hell and their souls asunder, will never be rich in grace, nor high in comfort or assurance, such souls usually goe to Heaven in a storm. O how weather-beaten are they before they can reach the Heavenly Harbour?

Secondly, They must exercise their gifts and graces, *Because 'tis the main end of Gods giving gifts and graces to them.*

Grace is given to trade with, 'tis given to lay out, not to lay up. Grace is a Candle that must not be put under a bushel, but set upon a Candle-stick. Grace is a golden treasure

Our graces are like *Gideon's Army*, but a handful in comparison: but our sins are like the *Midianites*, innumerable as Grasshoppers.

One day God will require of men, *Non quid legerim, sed quid egerim, nec quid dixerim, sed quomodo vixerim.*

The reason (say some) why Christ curst the Fig-tree, though the time of bearing fruit was not come was because it made a glorious shew with leaves, and promised much, but brought forth nothing.

that must be improved, not hoarded up, as men do their gold. Grace is a Talent, and 'tis given for this very end, that it should be employed and improved for the honour and advantage of him that gave it. The sloathful servant, in Gods account, is an evil servant, and accordingly God has denoted him, and doomed him for his ill husbandry, to destruction. *Mat. 25. 24. to 31.*

Jerom.

What a shame is it (saith one) that faith should not be able to do that which infidelity hath done? What, not better fruit in the Vineyard, in the Garden of God, then in the wilderness? What, not better fruit grow upon the Tree of Life, then upon the root of Nature? &c.

And then thirdly,

Because grace exercised and improved, will do that for us, that all the means in the world can never do for us.

I shall evidence this truth in some remarkable instances.

Suppose the guilt of sin be upon a mans soul, even as a heavy Mountain, there's nothing but the exercise of grace now that can remove this guilt. The man prays, and yet guilt sticks upon him; he hears, and yet guilt as a mountain lyes heavy upon him; he mourns, he sighs, he groans, and yet guilt sticks upon him; he runs from Ordinance to Ordinance, and from ordinary services, to extraordinary, and yet guilt followes him; he runs from man to man, Sir was ever any mans case like mine? I have prayed thus long, I have heard thus long, I have mourned thus long, &c. and yet guilt lyes as a Mountain upon my soul. There's nothing now below the exercise of grace, that will remove this; 'tis only faith in the Promises of remission, that will remove the guilt of sin, that lyes so heavy upon the soul. 'Tis only faiths application of the righteousness of Christ, that can take off this burden that sinks the soul, even as low as Hell. Faith must make a Plaster of the blood of Christ, and apply it to the soul, or the soul will dye under its guilt. There's nothing below this can do it. Faiths application of the blood of Christ, takes off the guilt, and turns the storm to a calm. *Rom. 5. 1. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

No Israelite that was bit or stung with the fiery Serpent, could be healed but by looking up to the brazen Serpent.

Those spots a Christian finds in his own heart, can only by a hand of faith be washed out in the blood of the Lamb.

Again,

Again, Suppose that the power and prevalency of sin hinders the souls sweet communion with God, so that the soul cannot sport it self, and joy and delight it self in God, as in the dayes of old; it cannot see God smiling, stroaking, and speaking kindly, as in former dayes. Now there's nothing in all the world that can ease the soul of this burden of sin, below the exercise of grace. Oh faith such a poor soul, I pray, Sir, and yet I sin; I resolve against sin, and yet I sin; I combat against sin, and yet I am carried captive by sin; I have left no outward means unattempted, and yet after all, my sins are too hard for me; after all my sweating, striving, and weeping, I am carried down the stream. There's nothing now but the actings of faith upon a crucified Christ, that will take off this burden from the soul of man. Now you must make use of your graces, to draw virtue from Christ; now faith must touch the hem of Christs garment, or thou wilt never be healed. 'Tis just with a soul in this case, as it was with the poor widow, *Luke 8. 43.* to 49. that had the bloody issue, she leaves no means unattempted, whereby she might be cured; she runs from one Physician to another, till she had spent all that she was worth, till she had brought a noble to nine pence, and now sayes she, *If I could but touch the hem of his garment, I should be whole.* Hereupon she crouds through the croud to come to Christ, and being got behind him, she touches the hem of his garment, and immediately she was made whole. The cure being thus wrought, Christ uncrowns himself to crown her faith. And he said unto her, daughter be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole, gain peace. He doth not say, woman thy trembling hath made thee whole, or woman thy sweating and struggling in a croud to come to me, hath made thee whole; or woman thy falling down and abasing thy self, (though she did all this) but, *woman thy faith hath made thee whole.* Ah Christians, 'tis not your trembling, or your falling down, or your sweating in this and that service, that will stop the bloody issue of your sins; but believing in Christ. 'Tis sad to consider how few professors in these dayes have attained the right way of mortifying of sin; they usually go on a-

Much lesse then can the Papists Purgatories, watchings, whippings &c. or Saint Francis his kissing or licking of Lepers sores, which will cleanse the fretting Leprosie of sin, &c.

A touch of faith cureth the woman, as well as a full held. 'Tis the exercise of the graces of the Spirit; by which we mortifie the deeds of the flesh, *Rom. 8. 13.* It is not our strong resolutions or purposes that will be able to overcome these enemies. A soul sore will run till it be indeed healed, though we say it shall not.

gainst their sins, in the strength of their own purposes, prayers and resolutions, &c. and scarce look so high as a crucified Christ, they mind not the exercise of their faith upon Christ, and therefore it's a righteous thing with Christ, that after all, they should be carried captive by their sins. Nothing eats out sin, like the actings of grace; nothing weakens and waits the strength of sin, like the exercise of grace. Oh did men believe more in Christ, sin would dye more; did they believe the threatenings more, sin would dye more; did they believe the Promises more, sin would dye more; did they believe reigning with Christ more, sin would dye more. *He that hath this hope, purifies himself, even as Christ is pure.*

1 John 3. 3.

Luther said, I am without rest upon by all the world, and within by the Devil and all his Angels, and yet by the exercise of grace he became victorious over them all, &c.

Supd; a Supp.

Again, Suppose that the soul be followed with black, dismal, fiery temptations, there's nothing now in all the world that can Divinely strengthen and fence the soul against these temptations, but the exercise of grace, the improvement of grace. 'Tis true, you are to hear, read, pray, meditate, &c. but all these without the exercise of grace in them, will never make you victorious over Satans temptations. Nothing puts Satan to it, like the exercise of grace.

'Tis said of Satan, that he should say to a holy man, who was much in the exercise of grace, (*Tu me semper vincis*) Thou dost allwayes overcome me. *Ephes. 6. 16. Above all take the shield of faith, whereby ye may be able to quench the fiery darts of the Devil.* Whatsoever piece of Armour you neglect, be sure that you neglect not the shield of faith. The Greek word that's here rendred a *Shield*, comes from another word that signifies a door, or a gate; to note, that as a door or a gate doth secure our bodies, so will the shield of faith secure our souls against the fiery darts of the Devil. *Above all take the shield of faith, whereby ye may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the Devil.* The Apostle alludes to the custom of the *Scythians*, who used to dip the heads of their Arrowes, or Darts, in the gall of Asps and Vipers, the venomous heat of which, like a fire in their flesh, kill'd the wounded with torments, the likest Hell of any other. But the Souldiers then had generally Shields of raw neats leather,

ther, as several Writers testify, and when the fiery darts lighted upon them, they were presently quencht. So these fiery darts of Satan, when they light upon the shield of faith, they are presently quenched, and there is no other way to do it, till the Lord draw out a mans faith to a stand upon the Promises, and upon Christ, these fiery darts will not be quencht.

Again, Suppose that the world, the smiling world, or the frowning world, the tempting world, or the persecuting world, should lye as a heavy stone or burden upon your hearts, as it doth upon the hearts of thousands in these days (witness their attempting any thing to get the favours, honours, and riches of this world. Ah how many have turn'd their backs upon God, and Christ, and truth, &c. to gain the world) how will you get off this burden? No way in the world like to the exercise and actings of grace. Many men hear much, and yet remain worldly; and pray like Angels, and yet live as if there were no Heaven nor hell. They will talk much of Heaven, and yet those that are spirituall and wise, do smell their breath to stink strong of earth, and all the art, and parts, and gifts in the world, can never cure them of this soul-killing disease, but the exercise of grace, till faith break forth in its glorious actings. A man may hear and pray many years, and yet be as carnal, base, and worldly as ever. There is no way under Heaven to remove this stone, this burden, but the exercise of faith and love, &c. *Cant. 8. 6, 7. 1 John 4. 5. For what soever is born of God, overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*

Not that the habit of faith overcometh the world, but faith in the exercise of it, conquers the world, and that it does these three ways.

First, Faith in the exercise of it presents the world to the soul, under all those notions that the Scripture holds forth the world unto us by.

The Scripture holds forth the world as an impotent thing as a mixt thing, as a mutable thing, as a momentary thing.

Now

**Polebium, and Vegetum, &c.*

Faith is a better Engineer then *Dadalan*, and yet he made wings, with which he made an escape over the high wals within which he was imprisoned. This world is the souls prison, yet faith is such an Engineer, that it can make wings for the soul to fly out, &c.

Divitiæ corporales pauperum, etis plene sunt.
Earthly Riches are full of poverty, faith *Austin*.

Now faith comes and sets this home with power upon the soul, and this takes the soul off from the world.

Secondly, Faith doth it by causing the soul to converse with more glorious, soul-satisfying, soul-delighting, and soul-contenting objects.

2 Cor. 4. 16, 17, 18. *Though our outward man perish, yet our inward man is renewed day by day (how comes this to passe?) while we * look not at the things which are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporall, but the things that are not seen, are eternall.* Now when faith is busied and exercised about soul-ennobling, soul-greatning, soul-raising, and soul-cheering objects, a Christian tramples the world under his feet; and now heavy afflictions are light, and long afflictions short, and bitter afflictions sweet unto him, &c. Now stand by world, welcome Christ, &c.

So in Heb. 11. It was the exercise of faith and hope upon noble and glorious objects, that carried them above the world, above the smiling world, and above the frowning world; above the tempting world, and above the persecuting world, as you may see by comparing several verses of that Chapter together. Vers. 9, 10. *By faith he sojourned in the Land of Promise, as in a strange Countrey, dwelling in Tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the Heirs with him of the same Promise; for he looked for a City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.* Vers. 24, 25, 26. *And by faith Moses when he was come to years, refused to be called the Son of Pharaohs Daughter, choosing rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches then the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect to the recompence of reward.* Vers. 27. *By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the King; for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.* And in Vers. 35. *They refused deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.*

So in Heb. 10. 34. *They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods (Upon what account?) Knowing in themselves, that they had in Heaven a better and more enduring substance.*

Thirdly and lastly, Faith doth it by assuring the soul of enjoying of better things. For my part I must confess, so far

as

* *ὁρατὸν καὶ τὸ αὐτό.*
Whiles we look upon external things as a man looks upon the mark that he aims to hit.

Every man is as the objects are about which his soul is most conversant, &c.

as I understand any thing of the things of God, I can't see how a soul under the power of a wel-grounded Assurance, can be a servant to his slave, I mean the world. I confess men may talk much of heaven, and of Christ, and Religion, &c. but give me a man that doth really and clearly live under the power of Divine Assurance, and I cannot see how such a one can be carried out in an inordinate love to these poor transitory things. I know not one instance in all the Scripture that can be produced to prove that ever any precious Saint that hath lived in the Assurance of Divine love, and that hath walk't up and down this world with his pardon in his bosom, have ever been charged with an inordinate love of the world. That's a sad word, 1 John 2. 15.

Now a fourth Reason of this Point why persons are to exercise their graces, is, Because it's the best way to preserve their souls from apostacy and backsliding from God, 2 Pet. 1. 5. to 11. *Adde to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, &c. for if ye do these things ye shall never fall. Adde to your faith virtue.* The Greek word that's here rendered *Adde*, hath a great emphasis in it, 'tis taken from dancing round; link them, saith the Apostle, hand in hand, as in dancing, virgins take hands, so we must joyn hand to hand in these measures of graces, lead up the dance of graces, as in the Galliard every one takes his turn: So in Cha. 3. 17. 18. *Ye therefore beloved, seeing ye know these things, beware lest ye also being led aside with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.* There are many turn aside, and shake hands with God, and Christ, and truth, and the words of righteousness; and therefore you had need to take heed that you fall not as others have fallen before you.

But how shall we be kept from apostatizing? why, *Grow in grace, & in the knowledge of our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ.* 'Tis a growth in grace, 'tis the exercise of grace that will make a man stand when others fall, yea when Cedars fall, &c.

Fifthly, All other exercises without the exercise of grace will profit nothing.

Heb. 11.1.

In my Treatise called *Heaven on Earth*, you may find many considerations to convince this, & to that I refer you, &c.

συναρπάξαι.

Pulchrior in
prælio occisus
miles quam
jugis saluum.

Or if you will, take it thus.

All other exercises will be loss to us, without the exercise of grace; therefore we had need to improve our graces. When the house is on fire, if a man should only pray, or cry, &c. he may be burnt for all that; therefore he must be active and stirring, he must run from place to place, and call out for help, and must work even in the fire, and better himself as for life, in the use of all means, whereby the fire may be quenched. So if grace be not acted, it's not all a mans praying and crying, &c. that will profit him, or better him; grace must be exercised, or all will be lost, prayers lost, tears lost, time lost, strength lost, soul lost, &c. *1 Tim. 4. 7, 8. But refuse prophane and old wives fables.* Shift them off, as the word is, let them by, say thou art not at leisure to attend them, make a fair excuse, as the word notes, tell them thou hast business of an eternal concernment to look after, and exercise thy self rather unto godlinesse; or lay aside thy upper Garments, as runners and wrestlers do, (to which the Apostle alludes) and bestir thy self lustily, for sayes he, *v. 8. Bodily exercise profits little, but godliness is profitable unto all things, and hath the promise of this life, and of that which is to come.* The Babylonians are said to make 360 several Commodities of the Palm Tree; but what are those hundred commodities to those thousands, that attend holinesse, that attend the exercise of grace? nothing makes a man rich in spirituals, like the frequent and constant actings of grace. In *Heb. 4. 2. The word did not profit them that heard it, because it was not mixed with faith.* He doth not speak there of unbelievers, but of those that had grace in the habit, but not in the exercise, and therefore the word did not run to their accounts, they heard and were never the better, and what was the ground of it? why, it was because they did not exercise faith upon the word. The words that fell from the Preachers lips into their ears, were a sweet Potion, but they did not work kindly, because there wanted the ingredients of faith. Faith is one of those glorious ingredients, that must make every Sermon, every truth, work for the souls advantage. Nothing will work for a believers good, for his gain, if his graces be asleepe.

Sixthly.

παρὰ τὸ make
a fair excuse.

οὐκ ἔστιν ἔτι
is
not to be taken
in a sense
wherein little
signifies nothing
at all,
but as when
it is set in
comparison
and opposition
to some
greater
matter, as
here in opposition
to
ἀποδοῦναι
for all things.
Let the Patient
take such
or such a portion
that in it
self is good,
yet if it want
such or such
a particular
ingredient, it
works not, it
do's no good,
tis so here.

Sixthly, Because it is the end of all the dignity and glory that God hath confer'd upon his people, therefore they must exercise and improve their grace. In 1 Per. 2. 9. *But ye are a chosen Generation, a Royall Priesthood, an Holy Nation, a peculiar People, that ye may shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*

You are a chosen Generation. That is, a pickt people, the dearly beloved of his soul, such as he first chose for his love, and then loves for his choyce.

A Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, a peculiar people. The Greek is, A people of purchase, such as comprehendeth as it were all Gods gettings, his whole flock; that he makes any reckoning of.

That ye may shew forth, Or as 'tis in the Greek, *That ye may preach forth,* that ye may publicly declare the virtues of him that hath called you out of darkness, into his marvellous light; that ye may so hold forth the virtues of him that hath conferred all this dignity and glory upon you, as to excite others to *Glorifie your father which is in Heaven.* You know the Picture of a dear friend is not to be thrust in a corner, but in some conspicuous place of the house: why, our graces are the very Image of Christ, they are his Picture, and therefore to be held forth to open view. These Candles must not be put under a Bushe, but set up in a Candlestick. Jewels are to wear, not to hide, so are our graces.

It was a capital crime in *Tiberin* dayes, to carry the Image of *Augustus* upon a Ring or Coin, into any sordid place; and shall not Christians be more mindful and careful, that their graces which are Christs Image, be no wayes obscured, but that they be kept alwayes sparkling and shining? Christs glory & thy comfort, O Christian, lyes, much in the sparkling of thy graces. Pearls are not to be thrust in mud walls, or hung in Swines snouts, but to be hung on the breasts.

Seventhly, Gracious souls must exercise their grace, because the more grace is exercised and improved, with the more ease & delight will all religious services be performed. When grace is improved and exercised, gracious services are easily performed. As the more natural strength is

λαδὲ εἰς πᾶν
ποίησαν.

Hopos tar are-
tar exaggeileto.

God himself
is wronged
by the injury
that is done
to his Image.
The con-
tempt is done
to the King
himself, that
is done to his
Image or
Coyn.
As *Sueronius*
writes.

Pfal. 40. 7, 8.
Pfal. 119. 97,
98, 99. 100,
103, 104, 111,
113.

A a 2

exercised

Rom. 6. 22.

Psal. 19. 11.

Prov. 3. 17.

Psal. 65. 11.

Abrahams

faith made

him rejoyce

and obey,

Heb. 11.

Faith is as the

spring in the

Watch, that

moves the

wheels. Not a

grace stirs, till

faith sets it

on work.

Rom. 4. 3. &c.

It is reported

in the Life of

Luther, that

when he

pray'd, it was

Tanta reveren-

tia ut si Deo,

Gratia seduct-

a ut amico,

&c.

Jonah 2. ult.

exercised and improved, with the more ease and pleasure are all bodily services performed; so the more grace is acted and improved, with the more ease and delight all Christian services are performed. Such souls find wages in their very work, they find not only for keeping, but also in keeping of his Commands there is great reward. All the wayes of the Lord are wayes of pleasantness to them, and they find that all his paths drop marrow and fatness. Ah Christians! as ever you would have the services of God to be ease and delightful to your souls, look to the exercise and improvement of your graces, and then your work will be a joy.

Eightly, You must exercise and improve your gifts and graces, because the more grace is improved, the more God will be honoured. Rom. 4. 19, 20, 21. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body, now dead, when he was about an hundred years old; neither the deadnesse of Sarahs womb, he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully perswaded, that what he had promised, he was able to perform.

He gave glory to God. But how did he give glory to God? was it a dead habit of faith that set the Crown of honour upon the head of God? no, it was the lively actings of his faith upon the promise and the promiser, that gave glory to God. All the honour and glory that God hath from believers in this life, is from the actings of their grace. 'Twas Abrahams a string of faith that was his high honouring of God. Christians, I would intreat this favour of you, that you would be often in the meditation of this truth, viz. That all the honour that God hath from believers in this life, is from the actings and exercise of their graces. When thou goest to prayer, then think thus with thy self, Is it so, that all the honour that God shall have from my soul in prayer, will be from the actings of grace in prayer? O then what cause have I to stir up my self to lay hold on God, and to blow up all those sparks of grace that be in me? As a body without a soul, much wood without fire, a bullet in a Gun without powder, so are words in prayer without the Spirit, without the exercise of the graces of the Spirit. Jonah acted his faith when

when he was in the belly of Hell, and *Daniel* acted faith when he was in the Lyons Den, and the Thief acted faith when he was on the Cross, and *Jeremiah* acted faith when he was in the Dungeon, and *Job* acted faith when he was on the Dunghill, and *David* acted faith when he was in his greatest distress, and so did *Moses* in *Exod.* 14. And you know the issue of all was, much glory to God, and much good to them. His heart will never be long a stranger to joy and peace, who is much in the exercise and actings of grace.

Ninthly, Because the more grace is improved, the more afflictions and tribulations will be lessened and sweetened to us. 2 Cor. 4. 16, 17. *I though our outward man decays, yet our inward man is renewed day by day, or, day and day.*

When *Peter Martyr* was dying, he said, *My body is weak, but my mind is well, well for the present, and will be better for ever hereafter.* This is the Godly mans Motto, *For afflictions there is glory, for light afflictions a weight of glory, for momentary afflictions eternal glory.* So in *Heb.* 10. & 11. *O friends! if your graces were more exercised and improved, afflictions would be more sweet; this would turn the Crosse into a Crown, this would turn bitter into sweet, and long winter nights into summer days. It would make every condition to be a Paradise to you, &c.*

Tenthly, If grace be not exercised and improved, the soul may be easily surpris'd, conquered, & vanquish'd by a tempting Devil, and an enticing world. When the sword is in the scabbard, the Traveller is easily surpris'd, and when the guard is asleep, the City is quickly conquered. The strongest Creature the Lyon, and the wisest Creature the Serpent, if they be dormant, are as easily surpris'd as the weakest worms. So the strongest and wisest Saints, if their graces be asleep, if they be only in the habit, and not in the exercise, they may be as easily surpris'd and vanquish'd, as the weakest Christians in all the world, as you may see in *David, Solomon, Sampson, Peter.* Every enemy insults over him that hath lost the use of his Weapons, &c.

Eleventhly, We must improve our graces, because decays in grace are very great losses to us. By decaying in grace, we

come

Dan. 6. 23.

So did the Publican, he prayed much though he spake little, or *Alto brevis penetrat cælum.* The hottest springs send forth their waters by ebullitions. *hæpæ unquæ.* *Augustin* cries out against them that did not profit by Afflictions; *Perdidistis utilitatem calamitatis.* *August. de Civit. l. 2. c. 33.*

Saints should be like a Seraphim, be set all over with eyes and lights, as *Basavian* said. The scarfull Hare they say sleepeth with her eyes open. Oh how watchfull then should a Christian be?

Spiritual losses are hardly recovered, a man may easily run down the Hill, but he cannot so easily get up. Philosophers say, that the way from the habit to the privation, is easier then the way from the privation to the habit.

As a man may soon put an instrument out of tune, but not so soon put it in again.

1 Cor. 2. 14.
Jer. 13. 23.
James 1. 17.

Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3.
When Charles Langier had lost his sight, he was brought to the study of true wisdom. My mind is to it, said Lippin, and then he falls to writing. When Charles Langier was purposing when thou shouldst be doing? *Psalm 119. 12.*

come to loose our strength, our best strength, our spiritual strength, our strength to do for God, our strength to wait on God, and walk with God, our strength to bear for God, our strength to suffer for God. By decaying in grace we come to loose that joy that's unspeakable and full of glory, and that comfort & peace that passeth understanding, & to loose the fence of that favour that's better then life. Now our faith will be turned into tear, our dancing into mourning, our rejoycing into sighing, and when, O Christian, thou beginnest to fall, and to decay, who knowes how far thou mayest fall? how much thy graces may be impaired? and how long it may be before thy Sun rise when once 'tis set? therefore you had need to exercise & improve your graces.

Twelfthly and lastly, You are to improve your graces, because souls truly gracious have a power to do good. I do not say that a man in his natural estate (though *Arminians* do) hath power in himself to do supernatural acts, as to believe in God, to love God, & the like, &c. for I think a Toad may as well spit Cordials, as a natural man do supernatural actions. Nor I do not say that all the grace we have is not from God, nor that man in his natural estate is not dead God-ward, and Christ-ward, and holiness-ward, and heaven-ward: But this I say, that souls truly gracious have a power to do good. 'Tis sad to think how many professors do excuse their negligence, by pretending an inability to do good, or by sitting down discouraged, as having in their hands no power at all; what can we do, say they, if the Lord do not breath upon us, as at first conversion? we can do nothing. I think in my very conscience, that this is one reason of much of that slowness, neglect, and omission of duties, that's among professors in these dayes, so that God may complain, as he doth, *Isa. 64. 7. There is no man that stirreth up himself to take hold of me, they are all men asleepe, that sit still and do nothing.* But certainly they that are truly united to Christ, are not acted as dead stocks, as if every time and moment of their acting God-wards, and holiness-ward, they received new life from the Spirit of Christ, as at first conversion they did. And I am confident, for want of the

the knowledge and due consideration of this truth, many professors take such liberty to themselves, as to live in the neglect of many precious duties of godliness, for which first or last they will pay dear: But remembering that 'tis not a flood of words, but weighty Arguments, that convince and persuade the souls and consciences of men, I shall give you four Reasons to demonstrate, that believers have a power to do good: And the first is this.

First, Because they have life, and all life is a power to act by, natural life is a power to act by, spiritual life is a power to act by, eternal life is a power to act by. The Philosopher saith, *I have a fly is more excellent than the Heavens, because the fly hath life; which the Heavens have not, &c.*

*Omnis vita est
propter deum.
Hanc enim.*

Secondly, Else there is no just ground for Christ to charge the guilt of sins upon them; as neglect of Prayer, Repentance, Mortification, nor the guilt of Carelessness & Slothfulness, &c. which he doth, if they can act no further, nor no longer then the holy Ghost acts them, as at their first conversion, notwithstanding their union with Christ, and that spiritual Principle of life that at first they received from Christ. Certainly if it be so, it will not stand with the unsporting justice of God to charge the guilt of sins of omission, upon believing souls, if they have no power to act, but are as stocks and stones, &c. as some dream.

*Omission of
Diet breeds
Diseases, for
doth omission
of duty, and
makes work
either for
Repentance,
Hell, or the
Physician of
souls.*

A third Ground is this, If there be not some power in believers to do good; then we should not have as much benefit by the second Adam, as we had by the first. The first Adam if he had stood, would have communicated a power to all his sons and daughters to have done good, and being corrupted he doth communicate power to sin, as all his children find by sad and woful experience; and shall not Christ much more communicate a power to us to do good in our measure? Surely he doth, though few mind is, & fewer improve it as they should. If there be not such a power in believers, how have they gain'd more by the second Adam, then they lost by the first? and wherein lyes the excellency of the second above the first?

*Ipse unum est
sibi omnia, qui
in ipso uno de
no, bona sunt
omnia. Aug.*

Fourthly & lastly, All those exhortations are void, and of none

none effect, if there be not some power in souls truly gracious to do good: As all those exhortations to watchfulness, to stir up the grace of God that is in us, and to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; and that also, Give all diligence to make your Calling and Election sure. To what purpose are all these precious Exhortations, if the regenerate man have no power at all to act any thing that's good? Nay then, believers under the Covenant of grace, should be in no better a condition, then unregenerate men that are under a Covenant of works, who see their duties discovered, but have no power to perform; which is contrary, as to other Scriptures, so to that, *Psal. 40. 7, 8, 9. Then said I, loe I come, in the volume of thy book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea thy Law is within my heart, or, Thy Law is in the midst of my bowels*, as the Hebrew reads it. And to that of *Ezek. 36. 25, 26, 27, &c.* A soul truly gracious can sincerely say, *Thy Law, O Lord is in the midst of my bowels*, and *I delight to do thy will, O Lord.* I confess I cannot do as I should, nor I shall never do it as I would, till I come to heaven; but this I can say in much uprightness, that *Thy Law is in my heart, and I delight to do thy will, O father.* And so *PAUL, With my mind I serve the Law of God, though with my flesh the Law of sin.*

Rom. 7. ult.

And we have many promises concerning Divine assistance, and if we did but stir up the grace of God that is in us, we should find the assistance of God, and the glorious breakings forth of his power and love, according to his Promise, and the work that he requires of us, *Isa. 26. 12. Ch. 64. 5. &c.* Though no believer doth what he should do, yet doubtlesse every believer might do more then he doth do, in order to Gods glory, and his own and others internal and eternal good. Affection without endeavour, is like *Rachel*, beautiful, but barren. They are blessed that do what they can, though they cannot but under-do.

When *Demosthenes* was asked, *What was the first part of an Orator, what the second, what the third,* he answered *Action*; the same may I say, if any should ask me, what is the first, the second, the third part of a Christian, I must answer, *Action*,
Luther

*Isa. 41. 10.
Heb. 13. 5, 6,
&c.*

*Beati sunt qui
praecepta faci-
unt, etiam si
non perficiunt.
Aug.*

Luther saith, He had rather obey then work Miracles. Obedience is better then sacrifice.

But Sir, you will say, What is the meaning of that Text, (that is so often in the mouthes of professors) *Without me you can do nothing*, John 15. 5.

I Answer, All that that Text holds forth, is this, That if a man hath not union with Christ, if he be not implanted into Christ, he can do nothing *without me* (that is, separate from me, or apart from me (as the words may be read) *you can do nothing*. If you are not implanted into me, if by the spirit and faith, you are not united unto me, you can do nothing. The arm may do much, it may offend an Enemy, and it may defend a mans life, by virtue of its union with the head; but if you separate the arm from the head, from the body, what can it do? Certainly the soul, by virtue of its union with Christ, may do much, though such as are separated from Christ, can do nothing, at least, as they should. Ah Christians! if you would but put out your selves to the utmost, you would find the Lord both ready and willing to assist you, to meet with you, and to do for you, above what you are able to ask, or think.

Caesar by continual employment, overcame two constant diseases, the Head-ach, and the Falling-sickness. Oh! the spiritual diseases that the active Christian overcomes. Among the *Egyptians*, idleness was a capital crime. Among the *Lucani*, he that lent money to an idle person, was to loose it. Among the *Corinthians*, the sloathful were delivered to the *Carnifex*, saith *Diphilus*. Oh! the deadly sins, the deadly temptations, the deadly judgements, that idle and sloathful Christians are given up to; therefore be active, be diligent, be abundant in the work of the Lord. Idleness is the very source of sin. Standing Pools gather mud, and nourish and breed venomous Creatures; and so do the hearts of idle and sloathful Christians, &c.

Now the second thing that we are to do for the further opening of this Point, is to shew you

*Χριστός ἑστίν ὁ
Σωτήρ ἡμῶν.
Vide Beza,
Cameron, and
Piscat.*

Union with
Christ is that
wherein the
strength,
comfort, and
happinesse of
the soul does
consist.

*The speciall Ends that the Gifts and
Graces that God hath bestowed
upon believers, should be
exercised and im-
proved to.*

And they are these that follow.

1 Cor. 10. 31.

First, They are to be improved and exercised to the honour of God, to the lifting up of God, and to the keeping up of his name and glory in the world.

Mat. 25.

He that improves not his gifts and graces to this end, crosses the grand end of Gods bestowing such royal favours on him. Graces and gifts are Talents that God hath given you to trade with, and not to hide in a Napkin. The idle servant, in Christs account, was an evil servant. The idle soul, in Christs account, is an evil soul, and accordingly Christ will deal with him.

Seneca calls sloath, *The Nurse of beggary, the Mother of misery*; and sloathful Christians find it so. Christians, God hath given you grace, that you should give him glory. His honour should be dearer to you, then your Jewels, then your Crowns, then your lives, I, then your very souls. Thou livest no longer then thou livest to his praise.

Plutarch in
his *Morals*.

It is recorded of *Epaminondas*, the Commander in chief of the *Thebanes*, That he did not glory in any thing but this, That his father whom he dearly loved and honoured, was living, when he won three famous Battels against the *Lacedaemonians*, that were then held for their valour to be invincible; regarding more the honour and content his father should receive of it, then his own. Shall a Heathen thus strive to honour his earthly father? And shall not Christians strive more to honour their heavenly father, with all the gifts and graces that he hath conferred upon them?

But you will say, How should we honour the Lord?

I an-

I answer.

1 By a free and frequent acknowledgment, that all your graces flow from the Lord Jesus, the fountain of grace. *John 1. 16. Of his fullnesse we all receive grace for grace. James 1. 17. Every good and perfect gift comes down from above, &c.* Thou must say, O Christian, I have nothing but what I have received; I have no light, no life, no love, no joy, no peace, but from above. The Jewels that hang in my breasts, and the Chains of Pearl that be about my neck, and the golden Crown that is upon my head, and all the sparkling Diamonds in that Crown, are all from above. All those Princely Ornaments by which I am made more beautiful and lovely then others, and all those beds of spices, and sweet flowers, by which I am made more desireable and delectable, is from above. Say, I am nothing, I have nothing of my own, all I am, and all I have, is from on high. *We have given thee of thine own, sayes David.* So do thou say, Lord, the love with which I love thee, is thine own; and the faith by which I hang upon thee, is thine own; and the fear by which I fear before thee is thine own; & the joy which I rejoyce before thee with, is thine own; & the patience with which I wait upon thee, is thine own, &c. And therefore say as *David* did, upon the receipt of mercy, *Blessed be thou Lord God of Israel, our father for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatnesse, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the Majesty, for all that is in the Heaven, and in the earth, is thine. Thine is the Kingdome, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou Reignest ever all, and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.*

2 You must honour him, By acknowledging the dependency of your graces upon the fountain of grace: And that your strength to stand, lyes not so much in your graces, as in their dependency upon the fountain of grace, as in their conjunction with the God of grace. A man by his arm may do much, but 'tis mainly by reason of its union and conjunction with the head. 'Tis so between a Christians graces,

B b 2

and

1 Cor. 4. 7.

Ezek. 16. 11.
to 15.
Psal. 45. 2. ult.

1 Chr. 29. 14.

Desu nihil coronat nisi dona sua. Aug.

Though our
graces be our
best Jewels,
yet they are
imperfect, and
as the Moon
shines by a
borrowed
light, so do
our graces; if
it were not
for the Sun of
righteous-
ness, all our
graces would
give no light.

and Christ. The stream doth not more depend upon the fountain, nor the branch upon the root, nor the Moon upon the Sun, nor the Child upon the Mother, nor the effect upon the cause, then our graces do depend upon the fountain of grace. *Psal.* 138. 3. *Phil.* 4. 12, 13.

Now that our very graces do thus depend upon the fountain of grace, and that our strength to stand, lyes not so much in our graces, as in Christ, is clear by this, That the graces of the Saints may and do most fail them, when they have most need of them. *Mark* 4. 40. *And he said, why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?* When the wind was high, their faith was low; when the storm was great, their faith was little. So *Luke* 8. 25. *And he said unto them, where is your faith?* Are you now to seek it, when you should use it? *Peter* denyed Christ, when he had need by faith to have confessed Christ. *Moses* faith fail'd him, when it should have been most serviceable to him, *Num.* 20. 12. *And Davids* courage fail'd him, when it should have been a buckler to him, *1 Sam.* 21. 13, 14. And the Disciples love fail'd them, when it should have been most usefull to them. *John* 14. 28. And *Job's* wisdom and patience fail'd him, when they should have been greatest supporters to him. By all which 'tis most clear, that not only our selves, but also our very graces must be supported by the God of grace, the fountain of grace, or else they will be to seek when we most need them. Though grace is a glorious Creature, it is but a Creature, and therefore must be upheld by its Creator. Though grace be a beautiful Child, yet 'tis but a Child, that must be upheld by the fathers arms. This Christians, you must remember, and give glory to God.

3 You must honour him by uncrowning your graces, to crown the God of your graces. By taking the Crown off from your own heads, and putting it upon his, or by laying it down at his feet, as they did theirs in *Rev.* 4. 10. *Acts* 3. 11, 12, 16. & *Chap.* 4. 7, 8, 9, 10. These Scriptures are Wells of living waters, they are Bee-hives full of honey, see and tast. The Lord hath often uncrowned himself, to crown his peoples graces, as you may see in these following Scrip-
tures.

*Certum est nos
facere quod sci-
mus, sed ille
facit, ut scia-
mus, scilicet Au-
gustine, True*

tures, *Mat. 9. 22. Chap. 15. 28. Mark 10. 52. Luke 7. 50.* And why then should not his people uncrown their graces, to crown him? That which others attribute to your graces, do you attribute to the God of grace. You must say, though our graces are precious, yet Christ is more precious; though they are sweet, yet Christ is most sweet; though they are lovely, yet Christ is altogether lovely. Your graces are but Christs Picture, Christs Image, and therefore don't you worship his Image, and in the mean while neglect his person. Make much of his Picture, but make more of himself; let his Picture have your eye, but let himself have your heart. Your graces are but Christs hands, by which he works, be you therefore careful that you don't more mind the workmans hands, then the workman himself. Your graces are but Christs servants, therefore don't smile upon the servant, and look askint upon the Master. Your graces are but Christs favourites, therefore don't so stare upon them, and be taken with them, as to forget the Prince on whom they wait, &c. All I drive at is this, That not your graces, but Christ may be all in all unto you, &c.

The second end to which you must improve your gifts and graces, is to the good of others. *Pf. 66. 16. Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul. Psal. 34. 8. O taste and see that the Lord is good, blessed is the man that trusteth in him.* God hath given you gifts and grace, to that very end, that you should improve them for others good. 'Tis the very nature of grace to be diffusive and communicative; grace can't be long conceal'd. The better any thing is, the more communicative it will be. Grace is as fire in the bones, as new Wine in the bottles, you cannot hide it, you must give vent to it, *Acts 4. 28. We cannot but speak the things that we have heard and seen;* as Cræsus his dumb Son did for his father. Can the fire cease to turn all combustible matter into fire? Can the candle once thoroughly lighted, cease to spend it self for the enlightning of others? then may the precious Sons of Zion cease to give light to others, by their examples, counsels, and communica-

it is, that we doe what we doe, but it is as true, that Christ makes us to do what we do.
Cant. 5. 10. ult.

John 1. 39. ult.

Ch. 4. 1. to 43.
Iia. 2. 3.
Acts 5. 26, 29.
Bonum est communicatum.

ting

ting their experiences. No way to honour God, no way to win souls, nor no way to increase your own gifts and graces, then to exercise them for the good of others. Grace is not like to worldly vanities, that diminish by distribution; nor like candles which keep the same light, though a thousand are lighted by them. Grace is like the widowes Oyl, which multiplyed by powring out; and like those Talents, which doubled by imployment.

'Twas a good saying of one, *For insensible riches those who pay their money, do diminish their substance, and they whereceive, are made richer*; but these not so, but both he who numbred, doth much increase his substance, and doth add much to the riches of the receiver.

Again, By how much more we pour out of these flowing spiritual things, by so much those spreading in abundance are greater to us; for in this case it doth not happen as in money, for there they who tell out to their Neighbour, diminish their own substance, and by how much the more he spendeth, by so much the less money he possesseth; but in spirituals 'tis quite otherwise.

No way to advance the Kingdom of Christ in the world, like this, of improving your gifts and graces to the advantage and profit of others. No love nor pity to the precious souls of men like this. No way to abound in grace, to be rich in grace, like this. Nor no way to be high in Heaven, like this. Art thou, O Christian, bound to do good to others, by communicating earthly things? And art thou not much more bound to do them good by communicating of spiritual things? Surely thou art. Why are Christians so often in Scripture compar'd to Trees, but because of their fruitfulness & usefulness to others? And why are they called *Stewards of the manifold gifts of God*, but to note to us, that their gifts are not to be inclosed, but imployed for the good of others? And why hath Christ put a box of precious Ointment into every Christians hand, but that it should be opened for the benefit of others? Certainly, he that is good, is bound to do good, for gifts and graces are given, not only to make us good, and keep us good, but also to make

2 Kings 4.
Mat. 25.

Chrysost. Hom.
Gen. 15.

Chrysost. Hom.
Gen. 8. p. 37.

Rom. 1. 11, 12.
2 Cor. 9. 6.
Suetonius tells
of Augustus,
That in reading
all sorts
of good Authors,
he skillfully pickt
out the prime
precepts and
patterns of
valour and
virtue, and
sent the same
to such of his
servants and
under officers

make us, yea, to provoke us to do good. *Lilmod Ielammed,* we therefore learn that we may teach, is a Proverb among the Rabbins. And I do therefore lay in, and lay up (saith the Heathen) that I may draw forth again, and lay out for the good of many. I think they are no good Christians that shall scorn to learn this good lesson, though of a Heathen. And O that all that write themselves Christians, were so good as to imitate the good that shin'd in many Heathens! To me 'tis sad, that Christians that live and act below the very Heathens, should be offended to hear now and then of those excellencies that sparkled in the very Heathens, I think that is a very evil spirit, that can't endure to hear of those excellencies in others, that he wants in himselfe. Certainly he is a brave Christian, and hath much of Christ within, that accounts nothing his own, that he does not communicate to others. The *Bee* doth store her Hive out of all sorts of flowers, for the common-benefit, and why then in this should not every Christian be like a *Bee*?

Syneſius speaks of some, who having a Treasure of rare abilities in them, would as soon part with their hearts, as their corruptions. I think they are rather Monsters, then real Christians, that are of such a spirit.

The third and last thing to which you are to improve your gifts and graces, is, To the benefit and profit of your own souls. Not to improve them to your own internal and eternal good, is with a high hand to crosse the main end of Gods conferring them upon you. Ah Christians! you must improve them to the strengthening of you against temptations, to the supporting of you under afflictions, to the keeping under of strong corruptions, to the sweetning of all mutations, and to the preparing and fitting of you for the dayes of your dissolution.

I shall content my self with giving you this hint, because I have before spoken more fully to this head.

And thus we have done with the Doctrinal part.

We shall come now to make some use and Application of this Point to our selves.

If this be so, That 'tis the Duty of Christians to improve and

for tokens, as he thought they might do most good unto.

The good of the soul is specially to be minded.

1 Because 'tis the most Noble part of man.

2 Because the Image of God is most fairly stamp'd upon it.

3 Because 'tis first converted.

4 Because it shall be first glorified.

Cupid complained, he could never fasten upon the Muses, because he could never find them idle.

No Christians so free from Satans assaults, as active Christians are, nor none so tempted as idle Christians.

The Jewish Rabbins report, that the same night that *Israel* departed out of *Egypt*, towards *Canaan*, all the Idols and Idolatrous temples in *Egypt*, by lightning and Earthquakes were broken down. So when grace and holiness is set up in the heart, all the Idols of Satan which are mens lusts, are thrown down.

and exercise the gifts and graces that the Lord hath given them.

Then in the first place, this looks very sowlly and wishly upon all lazie, idle, negligent Christians, that do not stir up themselves to lay hold on God, that do not stir up the grace of the Lord in them. 'Tis sad to consider, how many Christians can stir up themselves to lay hold on all opportunities to make themselves great and rich in the world, and yet suffer their golden gifts and graces even to grow rusty for want of exercise. 'Tis sad to see how busie many men are, to exercise and improve a Talent of riches, who yet bind up their Talents of gifts and grace in a Napkin. By these God looses much honour and praise, and themselves loose much comfort and content, and others loose much profit & benefit, & the Gospel looses much credit & glory.

But the main use that I shall make of this Point, shall be to exhort and stir you all up, to make a blessed improvement of your graces.

And indeed it is a Point of most singular use to us all our dayes, a truth that is every day of very great concernment to our souls.

Now there are seven Considerations that I shall propound by way of Motive, to stir up your souls to make a blessed improvement of the grace and gifts you have received.

And the first is this, *Seriously consider, that the exercise and improvement of grace in your souls, will be more and more the death and ruine of sin in your souls.*

Take it from experience, There is not a choicer way then this, for a man to bring under the power of his sin, then to keep up the exercise of his grace. Sin and Grace are like two Buckets at a Well, when one is up, the other is down; they are like the two Lawrels at *Rome*, when one flourishes, the other withers. Certainly, the readiest and the surest way to bring under the power of sin, is to be much in the exercise of grace. *Rom. 8. 10. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin, but the spirit is life, because of righteousness.* The life and activity of Christ and grace in the soul, is the death and destruction of sin in the soul. The more grace

grace acts in the soul, the more sin withers and dyes in the soul. The stronger the house of *David* grew, 2 *Sam.* 3. the weaker the house of *Saul* grew. As the house of *David* grew every day stronger and stronger, so the house of *Saul* every day grew weaker, and weaker. So the activity of the new man, is the death of the old man. When Christ began to bestir himself in the Temple, the Money-changers quickly fled out. So when grace is active and stirring in the soul, corruption quickly flies. A man may find out many ways to hide his sin, but he will never find out any way to subdue his sin, but by the exercise of grace. Of all Christians, none so mortified as those in whom grace is most exercised. Sin is a Viper that must be killed, or 'twill kill you for ever; and there is no way to kill it, but by the exercise of grace.

Secondly, Consider this by way of Motive to provoke you to exercise and improve your graces, *The exercise and improvement of your graces, will provoke others to blesse and admire the God of grace. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorifie your father which is in Heaven.* The light of your conversation, and the light of your graces. Oh! how many thousand souls be there now triumphing in Heaven, whose gifts and graces shin'd gloriously when they were on earth. And ah! how many thousands are there now on earth, that blesse and admire the Lord for the shine of their graces, who are now in Heaven; that blesse the Lord for the faith of *Abraham*, and the zeal of *David*, and the meekness of *Moses*, and the patience of *Job*, and the courage of *Joshua*, &c. Ah Christians! as you would stir up others to exalt the God of grace, look to the exercise and improvement of your graces. When poor servants shal live in a family, and see the faith of a Master, and the love of a Master, and the wisdom of a Master, and the patience of a Master, and the humility of a Master, &c. shining like so many stars of Heaven, O how doth it draw forth their hearts to blesse the Lord, that ever they came into such a family? 'Tis not a profession of Religion, but the exercise and improvement of grace, that contributes so much to the lifting up the glory of the Lord, and to the greatning of his praise

Mat. 21. 12, 13, 14.

Mat. 5. 16.
The exercise of virtue will draw love from a mans very enemies. Tilligny for his rare virtues was reserved from death, by his greatest Enemies, at the Massacre of Paris; as you may see in the French History, in the Life of *Charls the Ninth*.

in the world. Many Saints have had their hearts warmed and heated by sitting by other Saints fires, by cying and dwelling upon other Saints graces. Ah! when mens graces shine as *Moses* his face did, when their lives, as one speaketh of *Josephs* life is a very Heaven, sparkling with variety of virtues, as with so many bright Stars. Ah! how are others stir'd up to glorifie God, and to cry out, these are Christians indeed? These are an honour to their God, a Crown to their Christ, and a credit to their Gospel. Oh! if they were all such, we would be Christians too. 'Tis a very great stumbling block to many poor sinners, to see men that make a very great and large profession of Christ, never to exercise and shew forth the virtues of Christ; they profess they know him, and yet by the non exercise of his virtues, they deny him.

'Twas one of *Matchiavels* Principles, That the appearance of virtue was only to be sought, because the use of it (saith he) is a trouble, but the credit of it a help. I am afraid that this cursed soul-damning Principle, is the best flower that grows in many mens Gardens in these dayes. Though there is no virtue, but is as a bright stone in a dark night, it shines and shewes its cleareness and beauty, 'tis as pure gold, the brighter for passing through the fire, yet how do most covet rather the name of virtue, then to be really virtuous? Such, I believe, shall have the hottest, and the lowest place in Hell. Well Christians, remember this, 'tis not a shew of grace, but the exercise of grace, that will provoke others to glorifie the fountain of grace. That's a very remarkable Scripture, 1 *Thess.* 2. 2, 3, 8. compared. *We give thanks to God alwayes for you, making mention of you in our prayers: Remembring without ceasing, your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God, and our father. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia, and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad.* In this eighth Verse you have an elegant Metaphor, which signifies, that their faith was so lively, that with its sound, as it were, it stirred up other Nations. The Greek word (*Exechetai*) is to sound as with the found of a

Trumpet,

Those in whom virtue is extinguish'd, are like unto painted and printed papers, which ignorant men honour and worship instead of Christ.
Ramleigh.

Hypocritis nihil est crudelius, impatientius, vindictius, cupidius.

There is not a more cruel creature, more impatient and vindictive, then an hypocrite, said *Luther*, who had the experience of it; therefore trust not to the *Matchavils* of the times.

Trumpet, to make sound afar off. Sayes the Apostle, your graces made a noise like a Trumpet, they stir'd up others to be gracious and active, as the Trumpet stirs up men to war. So in 2 *Pet.* 1. 3, 4. *We are bound to give thanks to God allwayes for you brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth. So that we our selves glory in you the Churches of God, for your patience and faith, in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure. Hoc enim Angelicum.* This is the Character of the Angelical Nature, to rejoyce in the graces and gracious actings of others. He that acts otherwise, holds forth the Image of the Devil, and declares himself a native of Hell.

Thirdly, consider, That the exercise and improvement of grace, may be a special means to stir up the exercise of grace in others.

Your improvement of grace may be a special means to stir up others to improve their graces also. 1 *Thess.* 1. 7. *So that we were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia, and Achaia.* Or as the Greek is, * *You were Types, moulds, patterns of piety to them that were in Christ long before you.* So in 2 *Cor.* 9. 2. *For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year agoe, and your zeal hath provoked very many.* I knew you were forward, and this I boasted of, I made it my glory to tell how grace shin'd in your souls. And, saith he, *your zeal hath provoked many.* When they saw how warm and lively, and active, how open-handed, and open-hearted you were to the poor Saints, their hearts were stir'd up to acts of charity also. Stories speak of some that could not sleep when they thought of the Trophies of other Worthies that went before them. The highest examples are very quickning and provoking.

That this may stick upon your souls, I beseech you bed & board, rise and walk with this one Consideration, viz. *That all the good you provoke others to by counsel or example, shall be put down to your account.* It shall certainly turn to your internal and eternal advantage. In the great day Christ will make

Pliny tells of some in the remote parts of India, that they have no mouths. We have many such monsters among us, that have no mouths to blefs God for the good that shines in others.

The complaint is ancient in Seneca, That commonly men live not *Ad rationem*, but *Ad similitudinem.* Sen. de *vita beati.* cap. 1. * *Τῶν οὐ.*

Præcepta docent, exempla movent. Precepts may instruct, but examples do persuade.

2 Sam. 12. 9.

They shall
shine as so
many Suns in
Heaven, who
are much in
stirring and
provoking of
others to the
exercise of
grace and
holiness.

Dan. 12. 3.
Dan. 6. 1, 2.

1 Sam. 24. 17.

Mark 6. 20.
So what a
deal of respect
& honour did
Alexander the
Great put up-
on *Jadus* the
High Priest.
Theodosius up-
on *Ambrose*,
& *Constantine*

nourable mention of all the good that thou hast stir'd and provok't others to, and will reward thee for it before Angels and men. The faith, the love, the hope, the charity, the patience, &c. that thou hast provok't others to, shall be put down to thy account, as if thou hadst been the only actor of them, &c. As all the sins that men provoke or stir up others to by their counsel or example, shall be put down to their accounts; as you may see in *David*, *David* did but send a Letter concerning the death of *Uriah*, and yet the charge cometh. *Thou hast slain Uriah with the sword.* As whatsoever is done by letter, counsel, or example, to provoke others to sin, shall certainly be charged upon mens accounts at last, so whatsoever good thou doest stir up others to, that shall be set upon thy score, and shall turn to thy eternal account in the day of Christ. Oh! who would not then labour, with all their might, even day and night, to stir up the grace of the Lord in themselves and others, seeing it shall turn to such a glorious account, in that day wherein Christ shall say (to his Father) *Lo here am I, and the children that thou hast given me, &c.*

Fourthly, consider this, *The exercise and improvement of grace, contributes very much both to the stopping the mouths of your enemies, and to the rendring of you lovely in the very eyes of your enemies.* O! there's nothing in all the world that contributes so much to the stopping of the mouths of your Enemies, and to the rendring of your souls lovely in the eyes of your enemies, as the exercise and improvement of your graces. As you may see in *David*, *David* improved his grace to a glorious height, and says *Saul*, *Thou art more righteous then I.* *John* improved his grace to a glorious height, and was much in the exercise of it, and what follows? why, *Herod* fear'd and revered him, knowing that he was a just and a holy man. O! how did the wisdom, faith, and holiness of *Joseph*, *Daniel*, and the three children silence their most enraged adversaries? yea, what a deal of honour did the exercise of their graces cause those Heathen Princes to put upon them? *1 Pet.* 2. 15. *For so is the will of God, that by well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.* 'Tis not all the talking and pro-

profession in the world; that can stop the mouths of foolish men, it must be well-doing, grace improved, grace exercised, and manifested in wayes of holiness, that must work so great a wonder, as to stop the mouths of wicked men.

The Greek word that is here Translated * *Well-doing*, is a Participle of the Present Tense, and notes the continual custome of wel-doing. And indeed, nothing but a continual course of wel-doing, will be able to stop the mouths of wicked persons. 'Tis not a fit of holinesse, but a course, that can produce so great a Miracle, as to stop the mouths of wicked men. *That ye might stop the mouth of ungodly men.*

The Greek is, *That ye may muzzle, or halter up.* There's no way in the world to button, muzzle, or halter up the mouths of wicked men, but by the exercise of your graces in wayes of wel-doing. Oh this will cause you to be well thought of, and well spoken of; this is that that will make even wicked men to say, These are Christians indeed, these are they that have not only a name to live, but are alive; that have not only a form of godlinesse, but the power. A Christians exercise of faith in times of wants, and of patience in times of affliction, and of courage in times of temptation, and of contentation in times of opposition, &c. doth mightily silence and stop the mouths of the worst of men.

Henry the second of France, being present at the Martyrdom of a certain Taylor burnt by him for Religion, was so terrified by beholding the wisdom, courage, faith and constancy of the said Martyr, that he swore at his going away, *That he would never be any more present at such a sight.*

Fifthly, *Dwell much upon the sweet nature of grace*, if you would have your souls carried out to the exercise and improvement of grace.

The name of grace, and the nature of grace, is very sweet. The Hebrew word that's rendred *grace*, signifies favour and mercy; and it answers to the Greek word *Charis*, that signifies favour and mercy: and some derive the Greek word from a word that signifies *joy*, because grace begets the greatest joy and sweetness in the spirits of men, that possibly can be.

upon Papbunism, kissing that eye of his that was bored out for the cause of Christ, &c.

* *αγαδοι εν τω*
τω.

ελευθ from
ελευθε

Epit. Hist. Gal.
82.

Grace is a Panoply against all troubles, and a Paradise of all pleasures.

Grace

Cant. 4. 10,
14, 16.

Chap. 6. 2.

Iſa. 55. 1, 2.

Pſal. 119. 103.

1 John. 3. 4.

Grace is compared to the sweetest things, to sweet Spices; to Wine and Milk. Grace is a beam of the Sun of righteousness, the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace is a sweet flower of Paradise, a spark of glory, &c. 'tis cherisht and maintain'd by that sweet word that's sweeter then the Honey - or the Honey-comb, and by sweet union and communion with the Father and the Son. 'Tis exercised about the sweetest objects; viz. God, Christ, Promises, and future glory. It sweetens all your services and duties; your best performances are but stinking sacrifices, if they are not attended with the exercise of grace. Grace is that heavenly salt, that makes all our services savoury and sweet in the nostrils of God. Grace is of the greatest and sweetest use to the soul, 'tis an Anchor at Sea, and a Shield at Land; 'tis a Staffe to uphold the soul, and a Sword to defend the soul; 'tis bread to strengthen the soul, and Wine to cheer the soul; 'tis Physick to cure all diseases, and a Plaister to heal all wounds, and a Cordiall to strengthen the soul under all faintings, &c. Grace is thy eye to see for Christ, thy ear to hear for Christ, thy head to contrive for Christ, thy tongue to speak for Christ, thy hand to do for Christ, and thy feet to walk with Christ. Grace makes men of the frowardeſt, ſowreſt, crabbedſt natures, to be of a sweet, lovely, amiable, pleasing temper. It turns Lyons into Lambs, Wolves into Sheep, Monsters into Men, and men into Angels, as you may see in *Adanasseſs*, *Paul*, *Mary Magdalen*, *Zachens*, and others. Yet sometimes grace in a rugged unheewn nature, is like a gold Ring on a leprous hand, or a Diamond set in iron, or a Jewel in a Swines snout, &c.

Iſa. 11. 7, 8, 9.

Latimer told the Clergy and the Bishops, That if they would not learn diligence and vigilance of the Prophets and Apostles, they should learn it of the Devil, who goes up and down his Diocese.

Sixthly, By way of Motive, consider this; *That wicked men do exercise and improve to the uttermost, all those principles of wickedness that be in them, against the ways of God, the honour of God, and the comforts of the Saints.*

Now shall wicked men improve all their Principles to the uttermost against God, his truth, and Saints, &c. And shall not Saints improve their graces to the honour of God; the advancement of truth, and the joy and benefit one of another? You may see the activity of wicked mens spirits, in

Prov.

Prov. 4. 16. They sleep not, unlesse they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken away, unlesse they cause some to fall. Oh they cannot rest. The wicked are like the troubled Sea (as Esay speaks) when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. So in 2 Pet. 2. 14. Having eyes full of adultery that cannot cease from sin, beguiling unstable souls. An heart they have exercised with covetous practices, cursed children, they break all Promises and Covenants with God and man, as Sampson did the new Ropes. So in Prov. 19. 19. A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment, for if thou deliver him, yet thou must do it again. The Hebrew word (*Tosiph*) signifies to adde; saith he, thou must adde deliverance to deliverance, for he will still be a adding sin to sin. So the Radix (*Jasaph*) is used, Deut. 29. 19. and in several other Scriptures. Such sinners make God a God of clouts, one that will not do as he saith. Ahab after he was threatened with utter rooting out, begat fifty Sons, as it were to crosse God, and to try it out with him. Let God thunder in his judgements, yet he will add sin to sin, he will proceed from evil to evil, till he comes to the very top of evil, viz. to be hardned in sin, and to scoffe at holinesse, &c.

The old *Italians* were wont in time of thunder, to shoot off their greatest Ordnance, and to ring their greatest Bells, to drown the noise of the Heavens. So let God thunder from Heaven, yet wicked men will so improve their wicked Principles, that their consciences may not hear the noise of the Thunder claps of Divine displeasure. The covetous man will improve his earthly Principles, and the ambitious man, his ambitious Principles; and the voluptuous man, his voluptuous Principles; & the unchast man, his unclean Principles; and the erroneous man, his erroneous Principles; and the blasphemous man, his blasphemous Principles, &c. Ah Sirs! shall wicked men thus improve their wicked Principles to the uttermost, against God, Christ, and Religion, and against the prosperity, peace, joy, and happines of the Saints? And shall not Saints improve their graces to the uttermost, for the honour of the Lord, the advancement of Religion, and the mutual profit and benefit of each other?

Seventhly,

Ila. 57. 20, 21. The Hebrew word: *וַיִּשְׁחָר* *Raschang* signifies properly, a laborious sinner, a practitioner in sin. The Verb *Raschang* signifies to make a stir, to be exceeding busie unquiet or troublesome, &c.

Ier. 9. 3.

Witnesse Ahab, Haman, Jebu, Jerobam, the Fool in the Gospel, and those in Mat. 23. 14, 15, 16.

Seventhly, *The more high and excellent any man is in grace, the more highly he shall be exalted in glory.*

Oh therefore exercise your grace, improve your grace. As you would be high in Heaven, labour to improve your graces much while you are here on Earth; for glory will be given out at last according to the exercise and improvement of your grace.

The more high and improved a mans graces be, the more that man will do for God; and the more any man doth for God, the more at last shall he receive from God, 1 Cor. 15. *last. Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* So Gal. 6. *He that sowes sparingly, shall reap sparingly; but he that sowes liberally, shall reap liberally.* The more any man hath improved his grace, the more that man will be able to bear and suffer for God; and the more any man bears and suffers for God, the more glory shall that man have at last from God, *Matth. 5. 11, 12. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evill against you falsely for my sake, rejoyce and be exceeding glad, or Leap and dance for joy: Why so? For great is your reward in Heaven,* God is a liberal Pay-master, and no small things can fall from so great and so gracious a hand as his. The more excellent any man is in grace, the more he is the delight of God. *Psalme 16. 3, 4. My goodnesse extendeth not to thee, but to the Saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.* Now this is spoken in the person of Christ, for the Apostle applies these words to Christ: Now saith Christ, *My goodnesse reaches not to thee, O father! but to the Saints, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.* And doubtlesse, they that are his greatest delight on Earth, shall be possesse of the greatest glory in Heaven. If fathers give the greatest portions to those children in whom they delight, why should not Christ? Is it equity in the one, and iniquity in the other? Surely no. Christ may doe with his own as he pleases.

Again, The more any man improves his grace, the clearer, sweeter, fuller, and richer is his enjoyments of God here.

Darius before he came to the Kingdom, received a Garment for a gift, of one *Syloson*, and when he became King, he rewarded him with the Command of his Countrey *Samu.*, &c.

Chaitete *hzi* *agallia* the. Leap and skip for joy, &c.

Acts 2. 25. The Father delights in all his Children, yet sometimes he delights more in one, then in another, &c.

here. There's no man in all the world that hath such enjoyments of God, as that man hath, that most improves his graces. 'Tis not he that knows most, nor him that hears most, nor yet he that talks most, but he that exercises grace most, that hath most communion with God, that hath the clearest visions of God, that hath the sweetest discoveries and manifestations of God. Now certainly if they that improve their graces most, have most of God here, then without controversy, they shall have most of God hereafter. Doubtlesse a man may as well plead for equal degrees of grace in this world, as for equal degrees of glory in the other world.

Again, If those who are most graceless and wicked, shall be most tormented, then certainly they that are most gracious, shall be most exalted in the day of Christ. But the more wicked any man is, the more shall he be tormented in the day of vengeance. *Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites; for ye shall receive the greater damnation.* The darkest, the lowest, the hottest place in Hell, is provided for you; therefore it roundly follows, That those that are most gracious, shall at last be most glorious.

Mat 23. 14.
Luke 12. 47, 48.

And thus much for the Motives that tend to provoke all the precious Sons of Zion, to make a through improvement of the gifts and graces that the Lord hath bestowed upon them.

I shall now come to the resolution of a weighty Question, and so conclude this Point, (which I have been the longer upon, by reason of its very great usefulness in these dayes, wherein men strive to exercise any thing, yea, every thing but grace and holiness, &c.)

Now the Question is this.

When may a soul be said to be excellent in grace, or to have highly improved grace.

Quest.

Now to this Question I shall give these following Answers.

Ans.

D d

First,

Many are seemingly good, till they come to be great, and then they prove stark naught, like the Monk in the Fable.
Rev. 3. 4.

Mat. 5. 44.
They use to say, if any man would have Mr. Fox doe him a good turn, let him do him an injury, &c.

Rom. 12. ult.

First, A soul that is high and excellent in grace, that hath improved his graces to a considerable height, will keep humble and unspotted under great outward enjoyments. 'Tis said of *Daniel*, that *He had an excellent spirit*; and herein did his excellent spirit appear, in that he was holy and humble in heart, though high in place and worth, &c. *Dan. 6. 3. to 7.* *Daniel* keeps humble and holy, when he is lifted high, yea, made the second man in the Kingdom. Malice it self could not find any thing against him, but in the matter of his God. 'Tis much to be very gracious when a man is very great; and to be high in holiness when advanc't to high places. Usually mens blood rises with their outward good. Certainly, they are worthy ones, and shall walk with Christ in white, whose Garments are not defiled with greatness, or riches, &c.

Secondly, They that have highly improved their graces, will comply with those commands of God that cross nature, that are contrary to nature. And doubtless that man hath improved his graces to a very high rate, whose heart complies with those Commands of God, that are cross & contrary to nature. As for a man to love them that loath him, to bless them that curse him, to pray for them that persecute him, &c. 'Tis nothing to love them that love us, and to speak well of them, that speak well of us; and to do well, and carry it well towards them, that carry it well towards us, Oh! but for a man to love those that hate him; to be courteous to them that are curish to him; to be sweet to them that are bitter to him, &c. this strongly demonstrates a high improvement of grace. Certainly that man is very good, who hath learned that holy lesson of *overcoming evil with good*. Such a one was *Stephen*, *Acts 7. 55. to ult.* He was a man full of the Holy Ghost, that is, of the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost; he was much in the exercise of grace, he can pray and sigh for them, yea, even weep tears of blood for them, who joyced to shed his blood. So did Christ weep over *Jerusalem*, so did *Titus*, so did *Marcellus* over *Syracuse*, so did *Scipio* over *Carthage*; but they shed tears for them, whose blood they were to shed, but Christ shed

shed tears for them who were to shed his blood. So *Abraham being strong in faith gave glory to God*, How? why, by complying with those Commands of God, that were contrary to flesh and blood; as the offering up of his Son, his only Son, his beloved Son, his Son of the Promise, and by leaving his own Countrey, and his near and dear relations, upon a word of Command. The Commands of God so change the whole man, and make him new, that you can hardly know him to be the same man, saith one. Well Sirs, remember this, 'tis a dangerous thing to neglect one of his Commands (though it be never so cross to flesh and blood) who by another is able to command you into nothing, or into Hell. *Let Luther hate me, and in his wrath call me a thousand times Devil, yet I will love him, and acknowledge him to be a most precious Servant of God, saith Calvin.*

Rom. 4.

*Lactant. de fals.
sa, sapiens. lib.
3. cap. 27.*

Thirdly, consider this, Such souls will follow the Lord fully, that have made an improvement of their graces. Oh! this was the glorious commendations of *Caleb and Joshua*, in *Numb. 14. 24.* that *They followed the Lord fully*, in the face of all difficulties and discouragements. *They had another spirit in them*, sayes the Text, they would go up and possesse the Land, though the walls were as high as Heaven, and the Sons of *Anak* were there; they made no more of it, then to go see and conquer.

*Veni, vidi, vici.
I came. I saw,
I overcame.
said that Em-
perour.*

They followed the Lord fully. In the Hebrew it is, *They fulfilled after me.* The Hebrew word is a metaphor taken from a Ship under sail, that is carried with a strong wind, as fearing neither sands, nor rocks, nor shelves, &c. Such have little, if any thing of Christ within, who follow him by halves, or haltingly.

I remember *Cyprian* brings in the Devil triumphing over Christ thus, *As for my followers, I never dyed for them, as Christ did for his; I never promised them so great reward, as Christ hath done to his, and yet I have more followers then he, and they doe more for me, then his doe for him.* O where is that spirit in these dayes, that was upon those Worthies? *Psalms 44.* *All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy Covenant; our*

heart

heart is not turned back, neither have our feet declined from thy way: I though thou hast sore broken us in the place of Dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.

Fourthly, Such souls that have improved their graces to a considerable height, will bless God as well when he frowns, as when he smiles.

As well when he takes, as when he gives, when he strikes, as when he strokes, as you may see by comparing the Scriptures in the Margent together. When the Lord had stript Job of all, and had set him naked upon the dunghil, why then sayes Job, *The Lord gives, and the Lord taketh away, and blessed be the name of the Lord.* Where grace is improved to a considerable height, it will work a soul to sit down satisfied with the naked enjoyment of God, without other things. *John 14. 8. Shew us the father, and it sufficeth us.* The sight of the father without honours, the sight of the father without riches, the sight of the father without mensfavour, will suffice the soul. As Jacob said, *It is enough that Joseph is alive,* so sayes the soul that is high in grace, 'tis enough that Jesus is alive, &c.

Fifthly, Souls that have improved their graces to a considerable height, will be good in bad times, and in bad places.

Such souls will bear up against the stream of evil examples, in the worst of times, and in the worst of places. *Abraham* was righteous in *Chaldon*: *Lot* was just in *Sodom*: *Daniel* holy in *Babylon*: *Job* upright and fearing God, in the Land of *Ux*, which was a prophane and most abominable superstitious place: *Nehemiah* zealous in *Damasco*. Oh take me a man that hath improved his grace, and the worse the times are, the better that man will be; he will bear up bravely against the stream of evil examples; he will be very good, when times, and all round about him are very bad.

Some say that *Roses* grow the sweeter, when they are planted by *Garlick*. Verily Christians that have gloriously improved their graces, are like those *Roses*, they grow sweeter and sweeter, holier and holier, by wicked men. The best Diamonds

Job 7. 21.

Levit. 10. 3.

2 Sam. 15. 25,

26.

Isa. 63. 14, 15.

Christus est mihi pro omnibus, sayes a Christian, as he said, *Plato est mihi pro omnibus*.

Though the Fishes live in the salt Sea, yet they are fresh. So though souls eminently gracious, live among the wicked, yet they retain their spirituallnesse, freshness, and life.

Diamonds shine most in the dark, and so do the best Christians shine most in the worst times.

Sixthly, Such turn their Principles into practice. They turn their speculations into power, their notions into facts, their glorious inside into a golden outside, *Psal. 45. 13.*

Seventhly, Such as have made a considerable improvement of their gifts and graces, have hearts as large as their heads: whereas most mens heads have outgrown their hearts, &c.

Eighthly, Such are alwayes most busied about the highest things, viz. God, Christ, Heaven, &c. *Phil. 3. 2 Tim. 4. 8. 2 Cor. 4. ult. Rom. 8. 18.*

Ninthly, Such are alwayes a doing or receiuing good. As Christ went up and down doing good, *Mat. 4. 23. Chap. 9. 35. Mark 6. 6.*

Tenthly and lastly, Such will mourn for wicked mens sins, as well as their own. Oh the tears, the sighs, the groans, that other sins fetch from these mens hearts! *Pambur.* in the Ecclesiastical History, wept when he saw a Harlot dressed with much care and cost, partly to see one take so much pains to go to Hell, and partly, because he had not been so careful to please God, as she had been to please a wanton Lover.

I have at this time only given you some short hints, whereby you may know whether you have made any considerable improvement of that grace the Lord hath given you. I do intend (by Divine permission) in a convenient time to declare much more of this to the world. I shall follow all what hath been said, with my prayers, that it may help on your internal and eternal welfare.

*Psal. 119.
Jerem. 9. 1, 2.
2 Pet. 2. 7, 8, 9.*

EPHES.



EPHES. 3. 8.

— — *The Unsearchable Riches
of Christ.*



OW the next Observation that we
shall begin with, is this.

*That the Lord Jesus Christ is
very rich.*

And the second will be this.

*That the great businesse and work of the
Ministry, is to hold forth to the People
the Riches of Christ.*

We shall begin with the first Point at this time, namely,
That the Lord Jesus Christ is very rich.

For the opening of this Point, we shall attempt these
three things.

- 1 To demonstrate this to be a truth, *That the Lord Jesus
is very rich.*
- 2 The Grounds why he is thus held forth in the word,
to be one full of *Unsearchable Riches.*
- 3 To shew you the Excellency of the Riches of Christ,
above all other riches in the world.

And then the use of the Point.

For

For the first, That the Lord Jesus Christ is very rich.

First, Express Scripture speaks out this truth. He is rich in goodness, *Rom. 2. 4.* Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness; that is ready to be employed for thy internal and eternal good, &c.

Again, He is rich in wisdom and knowledge, *Col. 2. 3.* In whom (speaking of Christ) are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Christ was content that his riches should be hid from the world; therefore do not thou be angry that thine is no more known to the world. What is thy one mite, to Christs many millions? &c.

Again, He is rich in grace, *Ephes. 1. 7.* By whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

Again, He is rich in glory, *Ephes. 1. 18.* That ye may know what is the hope of his Calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints. So in *Chap. 3. 16.* That he would grant unto you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man. So in *Phil. 4. 19.* But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ. The riches of glory are unconceivable riches. Search is made through all the bowels of the Earth, for something to shadow it by. The riches of this glory is fitter to be believed, then to be discoursed of, as some of the very Heathens have acknowledged.

But secondly, As express Scripture speaks out this truth, That Christ is very rich, so there are eight things more, that do with open mouth speak out Christ to be very rich.

First, You may judge of his riches, by the dowry and portion that his father hath given him. In *Psal. 2. 7.* Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee; ask of me, and I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. He is the Heir of all things, all things above and below, in Heaven and Earth are his, *Heb. 1. 2.* God hath in these last dayes spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed Heir of all things. Christ is the eldest Heir in Heaven and Earth. Men cry up this man

To chreston.
His native
goodness, &c.

As man is an
Epitome of
the whole
world, so is
Christ of all
wisdom and
knowledge,
&c.

Nec Christus
nec celum pati-
tur hyperbolice.
Neither
Christ nor
Heaven can
be hyperboli-
zed.

Christ is
the Heir of
all things,
above and
below.

Christ is
the Heir of
all things.

Christ is
the Heir of
all things.

Christ is
the Heir of
all things.

Field

to

to be a good Match, and that, and why for but because they are great Heirs. Ah! but what are all the great Heirs of the world, to this Heir, the Lord Jesus? Joseph gave Portions to all his brethren, but to Benjamin a Portion five times as good as what he gave the residue. So the Lord scatters portions among the sons of men; he gives brags to some, gold to others; temporals to some, spirituals to others; but the greatest portion of all, he hath given into the hands of Christ, whom he hath made the Heir of all things, *Rev. 11. 15.* And the seventh Angel sounded, and there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever. So in Chap. 19. 11, 12. And I saw Heaven opened, and behold a white Horse, and he that sat upon him was called, faithful and true, and in righteousness he doth judge, and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many Crowns. (Mark that.) What are Princes single Crowns, & the Popes triple Crown, to Christs many Crowns? Certainly he must be very rich, that hath so many Kingdoms and Crowns. Wait but a while, and you shall see these Scriptures made good, &c.

Secondly, You may judge of his Riches, by his keeping open house for the relief and supply of all created Creatures, both in Heaven and in Earth.

You look upon those as very rich, that keep open house for all commers and goers; why, such a one is the Lord Jesus Christ, he keeps open house for all commers and goers, for all created Creatures both in Heaven and Earth. *Psal. 104. 24.* The earth is full of thy riches; so is the great & wide Sea, where are things creeping innumerable, both small and great. He opens his hand, and he satisfies every living Creature, says the Psalmist. So *Isa. 55. 1.* Ho, every one that thirsteth, let him come and buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore dost thou lay out thy money for that which is not bread, and thy strength for that which doth not profit? All Creatures, high and low, honourable and base, noble and ignoble, blessed and cursed, are fed at the cost and charge of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are all fed at his Table,

Craesus was so rich, that he maintained a whole Army with his own Revenues. But what is this to what Jesus doth? &c.

Psal. 145. 16.

ble and maintained by what comes out of his Treasury, his Purse. All Angels and Saints above, and all Saints and sinners below, are beholding to Christ for what they enjoy. Oh the multitudes, the numberless number of those that live upon the cost and charge of Christ! Can you number the Stars of Heaven? can you number the Sands upon the Sea-shore? then may you number the multitudes, the millions of Angels and men that are maintained upon the cost and charge of the Lord Jesus. In *Col. 1. 16, 17* For by him were all things created that are in Heaven and that are in Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers, all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Thirdly, You may judge of the riches of Christ by the time that he hath fed and clothed, cherished and maintained so many innumerable millions of Angels and men.

He hath maintained his Court above and below, upon his own cost and charge, for almost six thousand years. Oh to keep such a multitude, if it were but for a day, would speak him out to be richer then all the Princes in the world: But to keep so many millions, and to keep them so long, what doth this speak out, but that Christ is infinitely rich, rich in goodness and mercy. It would beggar all the Princes on Earth, to keep but one day the least part of those that Christ maintains every day, &c.

But fourthly, You may judge of the riches of Christ by this, that he doth not only enrich all the Saints, but all of the Saints.

That is, he enriches all the faculties of their souls, he enriches their understandings with glorious light, their consciences with quickness, pureness, tenderness and quietness, and their wills with holy intentions, and heavenly resolutions, and their affections of love, joy, fear, &c. with life, heat, and warmth, and with the beauty and glory of the most soul-enriching, soul-delighting, soul-ravishing, and soul-contenting objects, &c. All Saints experiences seal to this truth, and therefore a touch shall suffice, &c.

Fifthly, Judge of the riches of Christ by this, That not-

withstanding all the vast expence and charge that he is at, and hath been at for so many millions of thousands, and that for near six thousand years, yet he is never the poorer, his Purse is never the emptier.

There is still in Christ a fulness of Abundance, and a fulness of Redundance, notwithstanding all that he hath expended. It were blasphemy to think that Christ should be a penny the poorer by all that he hath laid out for the relief of all those that have their dependance upon him. *Col. 1. 19. It pleased the father that in him should all fulnesse dwell.* Not stay, or abide a night, or a day, and away, but should Dwell. The Sun hath not the less light, for filling the Stars with light. A fountain hath not the less for filling the lesser vessels. There is in Christ (*Plenitudo fontis*) the fulness of a fountain. The overflowing fountain powres out water abundantly, and yet remains full; why, the Lord Jesus is such an overflowing fountain, he fills all, and yet remains full. Christ hath the greatest worth and wealth in him; as the worth and value of many pieces of silver is in one piece of gold, so all the petty excellencies scattered abroad in the Creature, are united to Christ; yea, all the whole volume of perfections, which is spread through Heaven and Earth, is Epitomized in him, &c.

Sixthly, The Lord Jesus is generally rich; and that speaks him out to be rich indeed, he is generally rich.

You have few persons that are generally rich, that is, a rich man indeed, that is generally rich, that is, that is rich in Money, and rich in Land, and rich in Commodities, and rich in Jewels, &c. Now the Lord Jesus Christ is one that is generally rich; he is rich in all spirituals, he is rich in goodness, rich in wisdom and knowledge, he is rich in grace, and rich in glory: Yea, he is generally rich in respect of temporals, *He is the Heir of all things.* He is the Heir of all the Gold in the world, and of all the Silver, and of all the Jewels, and of all the Land, and of all the Cattel in the world, as you may see by comparing some Scriptures together. *Hos. 2. 5, 8, 9. For their mother hath played the Harlot, she that conceived them hath done shamefully; for she said, I*

will

They say 'tis true of the Oyle at Rhe-mes, That though it be continually spent in the inauguration of their Kings of France, yet it never wasts I am sure though all Creatures spend continually on Christs stock, yet it never wasteth.

The Philosopher once said (*Solus sapiens dives*) Only the wise man is the rich man, &c.

will goe after my Lovers that gave me my bread and my water, and my wool, and my flax, and my Oyle, and my drink. But mark what follows, Vers. 8, 9. For she did not know that I gave her Corn, and Wine, and Oyle, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal; therefore will I return, and take away my Corn in the time thereof, and my Wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax, given to cover her nakedness. So in Psal. 24. 1. The Earth is the Lords, and the fullnesse thereof, the round world, and all that dwell therein. All others are either Usurpers or Stewards; 'tis the Lord Jesus that is the great Land-lord of Heaven and Earth. So in Psal. 50. 8, 9, 10. I will not reprove thee for thy Sacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings, I will take no Bullock out of thy house, nor Hee-goats out of thy folds, for every Beast of the Forrest is mine, and the Cattel upon a thousand Hills. I know all the Fowls of the Mountains, and the wild Beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine, and the fullnesse thereof. 'Tis all mine, saith the Lord.

Thus you see that the Lord is generally rich, rich in houses, in Lands, in Gold, in Silver, in Cattel, &c. in all temporals as well as in spirituals; but where will you find a man that is generally rich, either in spirituals or temporals. 'Tis true, you may find one Christian rich in one grace, and another Christian rich in another, but where will you find a Christian that is generally rich, that is rich in every grace? that is rich in knowledge, in faith, in love, in wisdom, in humility, in meekness, in patience, in self-denial. Abraham was rich in Faith, and Moses was rich in Meekness, and Job was rich in Patience, and Joshua was rich in Courage, and David was rich in Uprightness, &c. But where will you find a Saint that is rich in all these graces? Or where will you find a man that is generally rich, in respect of temporals, as to be rich in Lands, and rich in Moneys, and rich in Wares, and rich in Jewels, &c. But now the Lord Jesus Christ is generally rich, both in respect of spirituals, and temporals. *In having nothing I have all things* (saith one) *because I have Christ, having therefore all things in him, I seek no other reward, for he is the universall reward, &c.*

Gregory the Great, was wont to say, That he was poor, whose soul was void of grace, not whose Coßers were empty of money.

Seventhly; You may judge of the riches of Christ, by the Tribute and Rent that is due to him.

He is the great Land-lord and owner of all that Angels and men possess above and below. All created Creatures are but *Tenants at will* to this rich Land-lord, the Lord Jesus. He puts out and puts in as he pleases; he lifts up one, and casts down another; he throws down the mighty, and sets up the needy, according to the pleasure of his own will. *Whom he will he destroys, and whom he will he saves alive.* Whom he will he binds, and whom he will he sets at liberty; whom he will he exalts, and whom he will he abases; whom he will he makes happy, and whom he will he makes miserable, &c. The Psalmist, *Pf. 148.* upon this account calls upon all Celestial and Terrestrial Creatures, to pay their Tribute of Praise to the Lord. He hath given them all their beings, and he maintains them all in the beings that he hath given them.

The Ancient *Hebrews* (as *Josephus* relates) set Marks and tokens sometimes on their Arms, sometimes at their Gates, to declare to all the world the Tribute and Praise that was due to the Lord for all his benefits and favours shewed unto them. *Bernard* saith, *We must imitate the Birds, who morning and evening, at the rising and setting of the Sun, omit not to pay the debt of praise that is due to their Creator.*

Eighthly and lastly, Judge of the riches of Christ by the multiplicity and variety of temporal and spiritual gifts and rewards that he scatters among the children of men.

He gives honours to thousands, and riches to thousands, and peace to thousands, and pardon to thousands, and the joys and comforts of the holy Ghost to thousands; there's not a moment that passes over his head, but he is a scattering of Jewels up and down the world; he throws some into one bosom, and others into others, but the best into the bosom of his Saints. Oh the abundance of peace, the abundance of joy and comfort! Oh the fear, the faith, the love, the kindness, the goodness and sweetness, that the Lord Jesus Christ scatters up and down among the precious Sons and daughters of *Zion*, besides all temporal favours. There's

not

*Quicquid es
debes creantis;
Quicquid petes
debes redimen-
ti.* Bern.

*Pfal. 113. 7.
Pfal. 148. 14.
Luke 1. 52.*

Christ saith to the beleever, as the King of *Israel* said to the King of *Syria*, *I am thine, and all that I have.* *1 Kings 20. 4.* This is *Alvearium Divini mellis*, an hive full of Divine comfort.

not a Saint that receives so much as a cup of cold water, but Christ rewards it abundantly into the bosome of the giver. By all which you may well judge, that certainly the Lord Jesus is very rich, for if he were not, he could never hold out in scattering of rich rewards among so many millions, and for so many thousand years as he hath done.

And so much for the proof of the Point, viz. *That the Lord Jesus is very rich.*

We come now in the second place to discover to you

*The Grounds and Reasons why the
Lord Jesus Christ is held forth
in the Word to be so
very rich.*

And they are these that follow.

First,

TO encourage poor sinners to look after, and to be willing to match with him.

Poverty hinders many a match. The Lord did foresee from eternity, that fallen man would never look after Christ, if there were not something to be gotten by Christ; the Lord hath therefore in his wisdom and goodness to fallen man, thus presenting him as one exceeding rich, that so poor sinners might fall in love with him, and be willing to give up themselves to him. Prov. 8. 34, 35. *Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my Gates, waiting at the Posts of my doors.* (As Princes Guards do at Princes Gates and doors.) Now the Arguments to draw out the soul thus to wait upon the Lord, lye in the next words; *For who so findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.* The Hebrew runs thus, *For finding me he shall find lives, and shall draw forth the favour of the Lord.* Divine favour is as it were a Jewel lockt up, I, but by finding Christ, by getting Christ, the soul gets this Jewel that is more worth then a world;

Mat. 10. 42. The Duke of Burgundy gave a poor man a great reward, for offering him a Rape Roo, being the best present the poor man had. And surely so will God bountifully reward the least favours shew'd to his.

Abrahams servant to win over the heart of Rebekah to Isaac, brings forth Jewels of silver, and Jewels of gold, and acquaints her what a rich Match she should have by matching with Isaac, & so overcame her, Gen. 24. And so does God deal with poor sinners, &c.

world; yea, by gaining him, the soul gains lives; to wit, a life of grace, and a life of glory, and what would the soul have more?

A second Ground of this, is,

Because he is Ordained by the father to convey all riches of grace to his chosen and beloved ones.

John 1. 16. *Of his fullness we all receive grace for grace.* And this we receive by divine ordination. John 6. 27. *Labour not (saith Christ) for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you, for him hath God the father sealed.* God the father hath sealed Christ, he hath designed Christ, he hath set Christ apart for this very work, that he might give grace unto us. God hath ordained to convey all fullness of light to the Aire by the Sun, and therefore hath put a greater fulness of light into the Sun. God hath ordained all fulness of nourishment to the branches, by the roots, and therefore hath put a fulness of juice into the roots. So the Lord hath ordained that all the riches of grace, of peace, of glory, &c. that believers shall enjoy here and in Heaven, they shall have from the Son of righteousness, from this blessed root the Lord Jesus Christ; and therefore the father hath filled this Sun with light, this root with heavenly juice, because he is by Divine Ordination to convey all spiritual and glorious Riches into the hearts of his chosen and beloved ones.

A third Ground is,

To take away all excuse from ungodly and wicked men, and that they may be found speechlesse in the day of vengeance, when the Lord shall come to reckon with them.

Ah sinners! how will you that have turn'd your backs upon Christ, who is thus rich, be able to answer it in the day when God shall reason the case with you? When God shall say, Sinners, hath it not been often told you that Christ is rich in mercy, and rich in goodness, and rich in grace, rich in pardons, rich in loves, and rich in glory, rich in spirituals, rich in temporals, and rich in eternals, and yet you have slighted this Christ, you have turned your backs upon this Christ, you have preferred your lusts and the world, and the

service

Sealed, that is, made his Commission authentical, as men doe their deeds by their Seal.

John 15. 21, 22.

Sivens are said to sing curiously while they live, but to roar horribly when they dye. So will all those that have rejected so rich a Jesus as hath

service of the Devil above this Christ. Oh! how dumb, how speechless will sinners be, when the Lord shall thus plead with them? Oh! how will their countenances be changed, their thoughts troubled, and their joynts loosed, their consciences enraged, and their souls terrified, when they shall see what a rich Match they have refused, and thereupon how justly they are for ever accursed, &c.

Lastly, it is upon this account;

That he may be a compleat Redeemer to us, and that nothing may hinder our souls closing with the Lord Jesus Christ.

We stand in need of one that's rich, rich in grace to pardon us, rich in power to support us, and rich in goodness to relieve us, and rich in glory to Crown us, there's none but such a Christ can serve our turns. We stand in need of one that's rich, that's generally rich, one that's rich in money to pay all our debts. We have run much upon the score with God and none can pay this score but Christ. Our sins are debts that none can pay but Christ. 'Tis not our tears, but his blood, 'tis not our sighs, but his sufferings, that can satisfy for our sins. We are much in debt to God, for the ground we tread on, the air we breath in, the beds we lye on, the bread we eat, the cloaths we wear, &c. and none can pay this debt but Christ. Angels and Saints may pity us, but they cannot discharge the least debt for us, &c. Christ must pay all, or we are prisoners for ever, &c. We stand in need of one that's rich in goodness, we are a needy people, and are still in want, Christ must be still a giving, or we shall be still a-languishing, if he shut his hand we perish and return to dust. Our temporal wants are many, our spiritual wants are more, and if Christ do not supply them, who will? who can? Nay our wants are so many, and so great, that Christ himself could not supply them, were he not very, very rich.

And thus I have given you a brief account of the Reasons of the Point, why the Lord Jesus is held forth by the Scripture to be so very rich.

been tendred to them, when the Lord Jesus shall plead with them, &c.

We may say of Christ, as Writers say of the Jassper, it is easier to admire, then declare it, & far more easier to say what he is not, then what he is.

We

We shall now come to the third thing proposed, and that is

*The Excellency of the Riches of
Christ above all other Ri-
ches in the
World.*

I shall briefly run over this third branch, and so come to the Application, which is most in my eye, and upon my heart.

The Excellency of the Riches of Christ, above all other Riches.

First, The riches of Christ are incomparable riches. *Prov. 3. 13, 14, 15. Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, (that is, the Lord Jesus Christ) and the man that getteth understanding; for the merchandize of it is better then the merchandize of silver, and the gain thereof then fine gold. She is more precious then Rubies, and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto her. One grain of grace is far beyond all the gold of Ophir, and all the silver of the Indies, which are but the guts and garbidge of the Earth. We may say of the riches of this world, compared with the riches of Christ, as Gideon sometime said of the Vintage of Abiezer, The Gleanings of Ephraim are better then the Vintage of Abiezer. So the gleanings the smallest gatherings of the riches of Christ, are far better, more excellent, more satisfying, more contenting, more ravishing, then all the riches of this world.*

Riches are called thick clay, *Hab. 2. 6.* which will sooner break the back, then lighten the heart, &c.

The whole Turkish Empire (saith Luther) is but a crust that God throwes to a Dogge. The wise Merchant, Mat. 13. 44, 45. parts with all to gain this Pearl of price; the truth is, other riches are but a burden. Gen. 13. 2. Abraham was very rich in Cattell, in silver, and in gold. The Hebrew word (Chabbedh) is, He was very heavy in Cattell, in silver, and in gold. To signifie, that riches are but heavy burdens. A little

little will serve nature, lesse will serve grace, but nothing will serve mens lusts.

Pheraulds a poor man, on whom *Cyrus* bestow'd so much, that he knew not what to do with his riches, being wearied out with care in keeping of them; he desired rather to live quietly, though poor, as he had done before, then to possess all those riches with discontent; therefore he gave away all his wealth, desiring only to enjoy so much as might supply his necessities. Let worldly professors think seriously of this story, and blush, &c.

Secondly, The Riches of Christ are inexhaustible Riches, as I have shew'd you, Christ can never be drawn dry.

The *Spanish* Ambassador coming to see the Treasury of *St. Mark* (in *Venice*) which is cryed up throughout the world, fell a groping whether it had any bottom, and being asked, why, answered, *In this among other things, my great Masters Treasure differs from yours, in that his hath no bottom, as I find yours to have*, alluding to the Mines of *Mexico*, and *Potosi*, &c. Certainly Christs Treasures have no bottom, all his bags are bottomless; but Scripture, History, and Experience, do abundantly testifie, that mens bags, purses, coffers, and Mines, may be exhausted, or drawn dry, but Christs can never; millions of thousands live upon Christ, and he feels it not, his Purse is alwayes full, though he be alwayes giving, &c.

Thirdly, The Riches of Christ are soul-satisfying Riches. O those Riches of grace and goodnesse that be in Christ, how do they satisfie the souls of sinners? A pardon doth not more satisfie a condemned man, nor bread the hungry man, nor drink the thirsty man, nor cloaths the naked man, nor health the sick man, then the Riches of Christ do satisfie the gracious man. *John 4. 13, 14. Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of living water, springing up to everlasting life.* Grace is a perpetual flowing fountain. Grace is compared to water, water serves to cool men when they are in a burning heat, so grace cools the soul when it

Earthly Riches are true Gardens of *Adonis*, where we can gather nothing but trivial flowers surrounded with many bryars, &c. Hast thou entered into the Treasures of the Snow? (saith God to *Job*) Now *Gregory* saith, That the Treasures of the Snow are worldly Riches, which men rake together, as Children doe Snow, which the next shewre washeth away, and leaves nothing in the roo but dirt, and can dirt satisfie? Surely no. No more can worldly Riches.

*Anima ratio-
nalis ceteris
omnibus occu-
pata potest, im-
plet non potest.*
Bern.

The reasona-
ble soul may
be busied a-
bout other
things, but it
cannot be
filled with
them, &c.

*Da Domine ut
sic possidamus
temporalia ut
non perdamus
eterna.* Bern.

Some say,
where Gold
growes, no
Plant will
prosper. So
no truth, no
good, &c.
will have any
heart-room,
where the
love of mo-
ney bears the
Bell, &c.

hath been even scorcht and burnt up under the sence of Di-
vine wrath and displeasure. Water is cleansing, so is grace;
water is fructifying, so is grace; and water is satisfying, it
satisfies the thirsty, and so doth grace. *Show us the father, and
it sufficeth us,* John 14.8. But now earthly riches can never
satisfie the soul, but as they said once of *Alexander*, *That had
he a body futable to his mind, he would set one foot upon Sea, and the
other upon Land*; he would reach the East with one hand,
and the West with the other. And doubtless the same
frame of spirit is to be found in all the Sons of *Adam*. In
Eccl. 5.10. *He that loves silver, shall not be satisfied with silver, nor
he that loveth abundance with increase. This is also vanity.* If a
man be hungry, silver cannot feed him; if naked, it cannot
cloath him; if cold, it cannot warm him; if sick, it can-
not recover him, much lesse then is it able to satisfie him.
Oh! but the riches of Christ are soul-satisfying riches. A
soul rich in spirituals, rich in eternals, sayes, I have
enough, though I have not this and that temporal good,
&c.

Fourthly, The riches of Christ are harmles riches; they
are riches that will not hurt the soul, that will not harm the
soul. Where is there a soul to be found in all the world, that
was ever made worse by spiritual riches? O but earthly ri-
ches have cast down many, they have slain many. If pover-
ty, with *Saul* hath kill'd her thousands, riches, with *David*
hath kill'd her ten thousands. *Eccl.* 5.13. *There is a sore evil
which I have seen under the Sun, namely, riches kept from the owners
thereof, to their hurt.* Earthly riches are called Thorns, and
well they may; for, as Thorns, they pierce both head and
heart; the head with cares in getting them, and the heart
with grief in parting with them. O! the souls that riches
have pierced thorow and thorow with many sorrowes! O
the minds that riches have blinded! O the hearts that riches
have hardened! O the consciences that riches have benum-
med! O the wills that riches have perverted! O the affe-
ctions that riches have disordered and destroyed! Earthly
riches are very vexing, very defiling, very dividing, and to
multitudes prove very ruining.

It was a wise and Christian speech of *Charles the Fifth*, to the Duke of *Venice*, who when he had shewed him the glory of his Princely Palace, and Earthly Paradise, instead of admiring it, or him for it, only returned him this grave and serious Memento, *Hæc sunt quæ faciunt invitos mori*, These are the things which make us unwilling to dye, &c.

Fifthly, The riches of Christ are unsearchable riches. This is plain in the Text, *Unto me who am lesse then the least of all Saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ*, There are riches of Justification, riches of Sanctification, riches of Consolation, and riches of Glorification in Christ. All the riches of Christ, are unsearchable riches. A Saint with all the light that he hath from the Spirit of Christ, is not able to search to the bottom of these riches. Nay, suppose that all the perfections of Angels and Saints in a glorified estate, should meet in one noble breast, yet all those perfections could not inable that glorious glorified Creature for to search to the bottom of Christs unsearchable riches. Doubtless when believers come to Heaven, when they shall see God face to face, when they shall know as they are known, when they shall be filled with the fullness of God, even then they will sweetly sing this Song, *O the height, the depth, the length, the breadth of the unsearchable riches of Christ*! As there is no Christ to this Christ, so there are no riches to his riches, &c. O but such are not the riches of this world, they may be reckoned, they may be fathomed, &c.

Sixthly, The riches of the Lord Jesus Christ are permanent and abiding riches; they are lasting; they are durable riches. That's a choyce Scripture, *Prov. 8. 18. Riches and honour are with me, yea, durable riches and righteousness*. The Hebrew word that's rendred *durable riches*, signifies old riches; all other riches are but new, they are but of yesterday, as it were: Oh but with me are old riches, durable riches; all other riches, in respect of their fickleness, are as a shadow, a Bird, a ship, an arrow, a dream, a post, &c. This *Valerian*, *Valens* and *Bajazet*, three proud Emperours, found by experience, and so have many Kings, and Generals, and Nobles,

The Philosophers seeing to the very bottom of earthly Riches, contemn'd them, and preferred a contemplative life above them. *Omnia mea mecum porto*, said *Bias*, one of the seven wise men of Greece, &c.

Hon Gualbak, It is reported of one *Thyrogenes*, when great gifts were sent him, he sent them back, saying I only desire this one thing at your Masters hands, to pray for me. that I may be saved for Eternity, &c.

bles, as Scripture and History doe abundantly evidence. Earthly Riches are very uncertain, *1 Tim. 6. 17.* They are euer upon the wing, they are like Tennisballs, which are banded up & down from one to another. As the bird hops from twig to twig, so do Riches from man to man. This age can furnish us with multitudes of instances of this nature, &c.

Seventhly and lastly, They are the most useful Riches, to sweeten all other Riches, mercies, and changes, &c. which speaks out the excellency of these Riches above all other Riches. The more useful any thing is, the more excellent it is. Now the Riches of Christ are of all things the most useful to poor souls. When the soul is under the guilt of sin, nothing relieves it like the Riches of Christ. When the soul is surrounded with temptations, nothing strengthens it like the Riches of Christ. When the soul is mourning under afflictions, nothing comforts it like the Riches of Christ. When state, friends, & trading fails, nothing makes a Christian sing care away, like the riches of Christ, &c. The Riches of Christ sweeten all other Riches that men enjoy. If a man be rich in parts, or rich in grace, rich in faith, rich in knowledge, rich in wisdom, rich in joy, rich in peace, &c. Or if a man be rich in temporals, rich in money, rich in wares, rich in jewels, rich in Lands, &c. the glorious & unsearchable Riches of Christ sweeten all his Riches, and the want of these riches, imbitters all the Riches that men enjoy, When mens consciences are inlightned & awakened, then they cry out, What are all these worldly riches to us, except we had an interest in the riches of Christ? As *Abraham* once said, *What are all these to me, except I see the Kings face?*

I have read of one, that upon his dying bed called for his bags, and laid a bag of gold to his heart, and then cryed out, *Take it away, it will not do, it will not do.* There are three things, that earthly riches can never doe.

They can never satisfie Divine Justice.

They can never pacifie Divine Wrath.

Nor they can never quiet a guilty conscience.

And till these things are done, man is undone. The Crown of gold can't cure the head-ach, nor the honourable Garter can't

Earthly Riches cannot enrich the soul, nor better the soul, oftentimes under silk & fatten Apparell, there is a shred-bare soul.

can't cure the Gout, nor the Chain of Pearls about the neck, cannot take away the pain of the teeth. O but the unsearchable Riches of Christ give ease under all pains and torments.

Ninus the *Scythian* King despising the rich Presents and Ornaments that were sent unto him by the Emperour of *Constantinople*, asked him that brought them, Whether those things could drive away calamities, diseases, or deaths? looking upon all those Presents as no presents, that could not keep off calamities from him. Verily, all the riches and glories of this world, cannot keep off the least calamity, neither can they make up the want of the least mercy. But the riches of Christ do both keep off calamities, and make up the want of all mercies that the soul craves, or needs. All which speak out the Excellency of the Riches of Christ, above all other Riches. We come now unto

* *Michael Pa-*
teologus.

THE Uses of this Point.

AND the first use that we shall make, is a use of Exhortation, to exhort you all, seeing Christ is so rich, to labour to be spiritually rich. Oh labour to be rich in grace. In the handling of this use, I shall propound this method.

Use.

- 1 I shall lay down some Considerations that may provoke your souls to labour to be rich in grace.
- 2 I shall propound some Directions, or Helps, to help you to be rich in grace; which is as much a mercy, as a duty, &c.
- 3 I shall lay down some Propositions concerning the souls being rich in grace.
- 4 I shall shew you how you may know whether you are the persons that are rich in grace, or no.

I shall begin with the first, and be a little the more large upon it, because it is a point of mighty weight, and concernment, and then be the more brief in the three following particulars.

For

For the first, by way of Motive, I shall only propound these following Considerations to provoke your souls labour to be rich in grace. *Laborandum*, was one of the Emperours Motto, and must be every Christians.

First, consider, *That the more rich the soul is in grace, the higher the soul will be in joy and comfort.*

O the joyes,
the joyes, the
unconceivable
joyes!
cried out Mi-
stris Katha-
rino Breiterge,
who had at-
tained to a
great measure
of grace, &c.

Is the greatest measure of grace, that usher in the greatest measure of joy & comfort into a believing heart. Christians, have you tasted of the consolations of God? Have you at times sat down and drank of these wells of salvation? Are your hearts carried out for more of those waters of life? then labour to be rich in grace. A little Star yields but a little light, & a little grace will yield but a little comfort, but great measures of grace will yield a man not only a Heaven hereafter, but also a Heaven of joy here. Divine comfort is a choice flower, a precious Jewel, and only to be found in their bosomes that are rich in grace. Spiritual comforts are such Strong-waters, that weak Christians are not able to bear them. Great measures of grace carry with them the greatest evidence of the truth of grace, and the clearer evidence there is in the soul of the truth of grace, the higher will joy and comfort spring. The soul is apt to hang her comforts on every hedge, to shift and shak in every bye-corner for comfort; but as Air lights not without the Sun, and as fuel heats not without fire, so neither can any thing soundly comfort a Christian, without the God of grace, without his being rich in grace. Great measures of grace carry with them the greatest evidence of a mans union and communion with God, and the more a mans union and communion with God is evident, the more will the soul be filled with that joy that is unspeakable and full of glory, and with that comfort and peace that passes understanding. In great measures of grace a man may read most of the love & favour of God, and the more a man sees of the love and favour of God to him, the more high the springs of comfort rise in him. In great measures of grace, as in a chrystal glass, the soul sees the glorious face of God shining and sparkling, and this fills the soul with joy. *Acts 9. 31. Then had the Chur-*

*Aeterna erit
exultatio, quae
bono letatur
aeterno, &c.*

ches

ches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied. The more their graces were increased, the more their comforts were augmented.

If one drop of the joy of the Holy Ghost should fall into Hell, it would swallow up all the torments of Hell, saith Austin. Oh! who would not then labour to increase in grace, that he may abound in joy? The promise lies most fair before their eyes that are rich in grace, their interest in it is most clear, & rarely that they go without it, unless it is by taking part sometimes with Satan against their interest in Christ, or sometimes through the power of unbelief, which indeed cuts off all the comfort of the soul, or by looking after other lovers, or by not hearkning to the voice of the comforter, &c. Christians, you often complain of the want of joy & comfort. Oh! do but abound in grace, & you won't complain of the want of comfort. *Without delight the soul cannot live!* (saith one) *take away all delight, & the soul dyes.* Let this that hath been spoken, provoke every Christian to labour to be rich in grace.

But secondly, consider this; *You have singular opportunities, and choice advantages to be rich in grace.*

There is a price put into your hands, but where are your hearts? In former times God gave our grace by drops, but now by flagons. Opportunities, if not improved, will, as that sword that Hector gave Ajax, be turned into your own bowels. This will be a sword in thy bowels, that there hath been soul-enriching opportunities, and thou hast neglected them, and turned thy back upon them. The thoughts of this will one day be the Scorpions that will vex thee, the Rod that will lash thee, the Thorns that will prick thee, and the Worm that will gnaw thee. *The Stork* (saith the Prophet) *knowes his appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow, observe the time of their coming, but my people know not the judgement of the Lord.* The Market for your souls is open, slip not your season, least with the foolish virgins, you go to buy when 'tis too late. The Merchant will not slip his opportunity of buying, nor the Saylor his of sailing, nor the Husbandman his of sowing, & why should you slip yours of grow-

Cant. 2. 3.

Jerem. 8. 7.

Mat. 25.

grow-

Such there have been, who by giving a glasse of water, opportunely, have obtain'd a Kingdome, as you may see in the story of *Thaumastus*, and King *Agrippa*, &c.

Pro. 1 24. ult.
Revel. 3. 20.

Pro. 24. 7, 8.

Mirabbim,
from *Rahab*.

growing rich in grace? Many men loose their souls, as *Saul* lost his Kingdom, by not discerning their time to be spiritually rich.

Tamerlin at first hung out a white Flag, but if they slipt that opportunity, then a red, and so death and destruction followed, &c. The Lord Jesus hangs out the white flag of mercy in these dayes, to intice souls to come in, and to share with him in his glorious and unsearchable Riches, in the riches of his grace and mercy; but if you stand out, Christ hath a red Flag, and if that be once put out, you are lost for ever. Thrice happy are those that take the first opportunity of closing with Christ, and of subjecting themselves to Christ.

Plutarch writes of *Hanniball*, That when he could have taken *Rome*, he would not, but when he would have taken *Rome*, he could not. When many men may have mercy, they won't, & when they would have mercy, they shan't. Mercy and grace are sometimes upon the bare knee. Christ stands knocking at sinners doors, he is willing to come in and make sinners rich and happy for ever, he calls upon souls to open to him. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in: Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in Battel. The King of glory comes not (*Vacuis manibus*) empty-handed; no, he comes with his hands and heart full of rich and royal Presents, and blest and inricht for ever are those that open to this King of glory, &c.

Thirdly, consider this, *Souls rich in grace shall have their names immortal*.

Every man naturally would have (if it were possible) his name immortal, now there's no way in the world to have your names immortal, like this of growing rich in grace. A man that's spiritually rich, shall live, and his name shall live, when he is dead. In *Nehem. 7. 2.* 'tis said of *Hannaniah*, that he was a faithful man, and feared God above many: Or, He feared God above multitudes, as the Hebrew hath it. His name lives, though his body for many hundred years hath been turn'd to dust. So in *Acts 7. 55.* *Stephen was a man full*

full of the Holy Ghost. Though Stephen was stoned, yet his name lives, his memorial is precious among the Saints to this very day. So in Heb. 11. 38. *They were such of whom this world was not worthy.* And in the third Epistle of John, the six first Verses, compared with v. 12. *Gaius and Demetrius, who were rich in grace, have Crowns of honour set upon their heads, their names live, and are a sweet savour to this very day, &c.* So in Ps. 112. 6. *The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance, but the name of the wicked shall rot.* The great mans name, and the rich mans name shall rot, saith he, but *The name of the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.*

The Persians use to write their Kings Names in golden Characters; so the Lord writes the names of souls rich in grace, in golden Characters; their names are alwayes heirs to their lives. Believe it, there's no such way in the world to have immortal names, like this of growing rich in grace. One man thinks to make his name immortal, by making himself great, another by heaping up silver and gold as the dust of the earth, or the stones of the street, and another by doing some strange exploits, &c. But for all this the Lord will make good his word, *The name of the wicked shall rot.* If God be God, his name must rot; but *The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance;* they leave their names behind for a blessing, Isa. 65. 15. 'Tis sad to consider what many poor carnal creatures have done & suffered, to make their names immortal. The Romans desires of praise and a name, made them bountiful of their purses, and prodigal of their lives.

Erostratus set the Temple of Diana on fire, on that night that Alexander was born, only that he might be talked of when he was dead.

Calvin observes, That Servetus in Geneva, in the year 1555. gave all his Goods to the poor, and his body to be burned, and all for a name, for a little glory among men. But these poor Creatures have all mist the mark. There's no way, Christians, to have your names immortal, like this, of growing rich in grace; Satan nor the world shall never be able to bury such mens names, who are rich in grace; their names shall rise in glory here, as well as their bodies hereafter.

Ego si bonum famam servaſſo, ſat dues ego.
If I may but keep a good name, I have wealth enough, ſaid Plaut. 1

A good name yields a fragrant ſmell over Town and Country, it puts a ſhining luſtre upon the countenance, it ſitteth to any publick employment, in Miniſtry or Magiſtracy; it ſtops many a ſoul mouth, and it makes men live when they are dead.

But then fourthly and mainly, consider, *That spiritual riches will inable you to live up to your Principles.*

That man that hath but so much grace as will keep Hell and his soul asunder, will never live up to his Principles. Souls weak in grace are too apt to deny, and in their practices to contradict their own Principles; and O that this age could not furnish us with too many instances of this nature! Oh! what's that that is the reproach of Religion, and the dishonour of God, and the Gospel, but this, that professors live below their Principles, that they live not up to their Principles? And, let me tell you, Christians, there is nothing but a rich measure of grace that will inable a soul to live up to his Principles. A man that is not rich in grace, will never be able to live up to his own Principles, but will upon every occasion and temptation, be ready to wound two at once, the honour of God, and his own soul. Yea, men that are not rich in grace, will be ready to deny their own Principles, as many weak Christians did in persecuting times.

But you will say to me, *What are those gracious and holy Principles, that a rich measure of grace will inable a man to live up to?*

I will instance only in those that have most worth and weight in them, and they are worthy of all your thoughts.

First, 'Tis your Principle, that

You must rather suffer, then sin.

'Tis your Principle rather to undergo the greatest Calamities, then willingly to commit the least iniquity. Now pray tell me, what will inable a Christian to live up to this Principle? will a little grace, a little knowledge of God, a little faith in God, a little love to God, a little zeal for God, a little communion with God? will this do it? surely no. It must be much grace that must inable the soul to live up to this Principle. When sin and suffering have stood in competition, many weak Christians have chosen rather to sin, then

'Tis better for me to be a Martyr, then a Monarch, said Ignatius, when he was to suffer, &c.

to suffer, which hath opened many a mouth, & sadden many a heart, and wounded many a conscience. Yea, such by their not suffering, have suffered more then ever they could have suffered from the wrath & rage of man. Oh! but now spiritual riches will enable a man to live up to this Principle, as you may see in *Daniel*, who had an excellent spirit in him, who was rich in grace, and filled with the Holy Ghost, he lives up to his Principles, he lives out his Principles, when he was put hard to it; when he must either neglect the worship of his God, and make a God of his King, or to the Lyons Den. Now *Daniel* chooses rather to be cast into the Lyons Den, then not to do homage to his God, He had rather suffer much, then that God should loose a dram of his glory. Of the same spirit and metal were those Worthies, *Heb. 11.* who when they were put to it, did rather chose to suffer the very worst of miseries, then they would in the least dishonour the Lord, wound their own consciences, and make work for repentance, &c. And so did *Justinian, Eusebius, Galasius, Basil, Vincentius, Basilas, &c.* By all which you see, That Christians that are spiritually rich, live up to this Principle, viz. To suffer rather then sin, when sin and suffering stand in competition, which Babes in grace cannot do.

Secondly, 'Tis your Principle,

That Grace and Virtue are to be pursued after, for their own worth, beauty, and excellency.

But pray tell me, what will carry a Christian out to this Principle? Will a little grace carry a man out to pursue after grace, for the beauty, holiness, excellency, and spirituality that is in it? Alas, we see by daily experience, that it will not do it. All other considerations put together, are little enough to draw men on to pursue after grace for its native beauty and excellency. Many seek Christ, but 'tis for loaves more then for love, and they pursue after the means of grace, not for the beauty, excellency, and glory that's stamp'd upon the means, but one to maintain his honour, and another to keep up his name, & another to bring in credit or custom,

Dan. 6.

Of the very same spirit were the Primitive Christians, they chose rather to be thrown to Lyons without, then left to lusts within.
Ad Leonem magis quam Leonem, saith Tertullian.

John 6. 26.

Phil. 3.

and another to please his friends, and another to silence his conscience, &c. but few there be (if any) but those that are rich in grace, that are true to this Principle, that pursue after grace, for its own beauty and excellency. It was a notable expression of David, who was a man rich in grace, *Psal. 119. 140. Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servants loveth it.* Oh! for a soul to love grace, and the word of grace, for its own interest, for the holiness, purity, and glory of it, this speaks out the soul to be rich in grace. So Paul, a man rich in grace, pursues after grace for its own interest, for the beauty and excellency of it. *He forgets what is behind, and presses forward after the mark for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, that if by any means he might attain to the resurrection of the dead.* That is, to that perfection that the dead shall reach to in the morning of the resurrection, &c.

There may be
*Malum opus in
bona materiâ,*
as in *Jehu's*
zeal, &c.

The young Philosophers were very forward to get the Precepts of their Sect, and the Rules of severity, that they might discourse with Kings & Nobles, nor that they might reform their own manners. Many professors in this age are like those Philosophers, they are very industrious to get knowledge, that they may be able to discourse, & that they may be eyed, owned, and honoured among others, for their knowledge and understanding. But now souls that are rich in grace, they labour after greater measures of grace, out of love to grace, and because of an excellency that they see in grace. Grace is a very sparkling Jewel, and he that loves it, and pursues after it for its own native beauty, hath much of it within him, &c.

Thirdly, 'Tis your Principle,

That men must subject themselves, and square all their actions by the word of God.

1sa. 8. 10.

Now what will make a man live up to this Principle? will a little grace? surely no. But great measures of grace will. *Zacharias and Elizabeth were rich in grace, and they liv'd up to this Principle, Luke 1. 5. They walked in all the Command-*

ments

ments of the Lord blameless. The Apostles were rich in grace, and they liv'd up to this Principle, 2 Cor. 1. 12. *This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world.* So in 1 Thess. 2. 10. *Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, justly, and unblameably, we have behaved our selves among you that believe.* Oh here are souls that live up to their Principles. A Christian that is rich in grace, is excellent all over.

George, Prince of Anhalt, his Family is said to have been (Ecclesia, Academia, Curia,) A Church, a University, and a Court. A Christian that is rich in grace, hath a heart as large as his head, yea, a heart that is as large as the whole will of God. Acts 13. 22. *I have found David the Son of Jesse, a man after my own heart, which shall fulfill all my will.* In the Greek 'tis, *All my wills*, to note the universality and sincerity of his obedience. Souls rich in grace, practice that themselves, which they prescribe to others. Lessons of Musick, and Copies, must not be read only, but acted also. Souls rich in grace, are good at this, and they will be good in all places and cases. They are as good at the particular duties of Religion, as at those that are more general; they are good Fathers, and good Masters, and good Husbands, as well as good Christians in a more general sense. But now souls that have but a little grace, they are much in the general duties of Religion, but very defective in the particular duties of religion, as sad experience doth abundantly evidence. Those that have a blemish in their eye, think the sky to be ever cloudy; and nothing is more common to weak spirits, than to be criticising and contending about other duties, and to neglect their own. But such that are rich in grace, make it their glory to subject themselves to the Rule of Righteousness: As Balduff a German Minister cryed out, Let the word of the Lord come, let it come. (saith he) and we will submit to it, if we had many hundred necks to put under. It must be much grace that must enable a man freely, fully, and sweetly to subject himself and his actions, to the word of the Lord.

Fourthly, 'Tis your Principle,

Σιλήματα.

That

That you must deny your selves, your own profit, ease, pleasure, &c. for a publick good.

And this the Scripture requires. 'Tis your Principle to deny your selves, your own honour, pleasure, profit, &c. for a publick advantage, when your particular advantages stand in competition with the publick. Now self must be laid by, and the publick must carry the day. Oh but will a little grace inable a man to live up to this Principle? Woful experience shews the contrary. I but now, take me a man that is rich in grace, and he will live up to this golden Principle, as you may see in *Nehem. 5. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.* *Nehemiah* was a man eminent in grace, and he chooses rather to live upon his own purse, then upon the publick purse. Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their Governour in the Land of Judah, from the twentieth year, even unto the thirty second year of Artaxerxes the King, that is, twelve years, I and my Brethren have not eaten the bread of the Governour. Behold the former Governours that had been before me, were chargeable unto the people, and had taken of them bread and wine, besides forty mules of silver, yea, even their servants did bear rule over the people, but so did not I because of the fear of God; yea, also I continued in the work of this wall, neither bought we any Land, and all my Servants were gathered thither unto the work. Moreover, there were at my Table an hundred and fifty of the Jewes and Rulers, besides those that came in to us from among the Heathen. And yet for all this (saith he) I required not the bread of the Governour, because the bondage was heavy upon the people. Oh! here was a brave spirit indeed, he was far from enriching himself by others ruines, from emptying others purses, to fill his own. But he is dead, and it seems this brave spirit is buried with him; there are few of his name, and fewer of his spirit (if any) in this world, and therefore well might he pray, *Think upon me my God for good, according to all that I have done for this people.* And accordingly God did think upon him for good, and made him very famous and glorious in his Generation. And that's a remarkable passage concerning

Moses

'Tis a base & unworthy spirit for a man to make himself the Centre of all his actions. The very Heathen man could say, A mans Country, and his Friends, and Others challenge a great part of him.

Moses, Num. 14. 12. to 21. I will smite them with the Pestilence, and dis-inherit them, and will make of thee a great Nation, and mightier then they, saith God to Moses. Therefore let me alone to destroy them, and cut them off, for they are a rebellious Generation. And I will make thee a mightier Nation for honour, riches, and power, then they. Nay, saith Moses, this may not be Lord. Oh the people must be spared, the people must be pardoned, and the people must have thy presence with them, and rather then it should be otherwise, let my name, Lord, be blotted out of the Book of life. Lord, I care not how ill it goes with my particular, so they may live. Can the self-seekers of our age think seriously of this, and not blush?

So *Mordecai* was a man of a brave publick spirit, *Esther* 10. 3. *Mordecai the Jew was next unto King Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people. Or as the Hebrew hath it, Seeking good for his people.* That is, he made it his businesse to seek their good. Christ also was full of grace, and had a brave publick spirit, he laid out himself, and laid down himself for a publick good, and so did *Paul*, &c. Few in our dayes are of his Opinion, and mind, who was rather willing to beautifie *Italy*, then his own house. *That Pilot dyes nobly* (saith *Seneca*) *who perisheth in the storm with the Helm in his hand.* Such that seek themselves more then the publick good, must be served as *Aesop* did his fellow servant, he gave him warm water to drink, by which means he vomited up the stollen Figs. Friends, 'tis not a little grace that will make a man prefer the publick good, above his own particular good, but much grace will; therefore labour to be rich in grace.

Fifthly, 'Tis your Principle,

Christ healed others, but wash:urt himself; he fed and filled others, but was hungry himself, &c.

That

That you are to do the Duties that God requires of you, and quietly leave the issues and events of all, to the wise dispose of God.

But pray tell me, will a little grace inable a man to live up to this Principle to do his duty, and to leave issues and events to him to whom they belong? surely no. *Ecc. 9. 10. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.* Mark, he doth not say, what thy Head finds to do, for that may find a thousand things; nor what thy heart finds to do, for that may find ten thousand things; but what thy Hand finds to do, that is, look what work God cuts out to thy hand to do, that do with all thy might, for there is no working in the grave. We are to do much good in a little time; we are made here, and set to be a doing something that may do us good a thousand years hence, yea, that may stand us in stead to eternity. Our time is short, our task is great, the Devil knows that his time is but short, and that's the reason why he is so active and stirring, why he do's our work the children of light, in a quick dispatch of the deeds of darkness. Christians don't deceive your selves, 'tis not shews of grace, nor little measures of grace, that will inable a man to live up to this Principle, but great measures of grace will, as you may see in the three Children, *We are not carefull to answer thee, O King in this matter, if it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hands, O King. But if not, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy Gods, nor worship the golden Image which thou hast set up.* We know our duty, and that we will keep to, whatever the issue and event be. So those worthies, *Psal. 44. Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of Dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy Covenant.* Here was much of Christ and grace within. So in *Acts 21.* when Paul was to go up to Jerusalem to suffer, his friends by many tears and Arguments laboured

laboured to dissuade him, for fear of some sad issue and event that would follow: But *Paul*, rich in grace, answered, *What mean ye to weep, and break my heart, for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to dye at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus.* I will go up to Jerusalem, and I am willing to go up, though I dye for it. There's a soul that lives up to his Principle: I, but now souls that are weak in grace (as we have had large experience of it in our times) they are more taken up, and busied about the events and issues of things, then they are with their own duties. When they should be a praying, a believing, a waiting, and acting for God, they have been a questioning, and fearing what the issue and event of this, and that, and the other thing would be: And indeed they have been high and low, as secondary causes have wrought, which hath made many of their lives a very Hell. But now those that are rich in grace, they say as once he did, *Let us be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the Cities of our God, and the Lord do that which seemeth him good.* Let us do our duties, and let the Lord do as pleaseth him, &c.

Many of the English have in this been like the Israelites, &c.

2 Sam. 10. 10, 11, 12.

Sixthly, 'Tis your Principle,

That men are to be prepared, and to stand fast against all sudden assaults and invasions that may be made upon them.

Many a valiant person dares fight in a Battel, or a Duel, who yet will be timorous and fearful, if suddenly surprized in a mid-night Alarum. Many precious souls, when they have time to consider of the evil of sin, the holiness of God, the eye of God, the honour of God, the glory of the Gospel, the joyes of the Saints, and the stopping of the mouths of sinners, will rather dye, then sin; they will rather suffer any thing, then do the least thing that may be a reproach to Christ. Oh! but when a sudden occasion or temptation is presented, why, then they often fall, as *David* by chance smit *Bathsheba* washing her self, and falls before the temptation, he is conquered & carried captive by that sudden oc-

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casion,

cation. But that's a more comfortable and considerable passage that you have concerning *Joseph*, in *Gen. 49. 23, 24.* *The Archers sorely grieved him (saith the Text) and shot at him, and hated him, but his Bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.* *Joseph* never wanted counsel nor courage, when he was at the work. Souls rich in grace (usually) stand firm under the greatest and suddenest pressures, assaults, and invasions, as you may see in *Paul*, *2 Cor. 1. 9. 12.* and so the three Children, and so *Daniel*, and so those Worthies, *Job. 11. 35.* *They would not accept of deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.* Many sudden assaults and attempts were made upon them, their enemies would fain have stormed them, and overcome them, sometimes by golden offers, sometimes by terrible threats, but they are invincible, nothing stirs them, nothing takes them. Really friends, it must be much grace that will make a man live up to this Principle; and there's nothing that speaks out more the strength of grace in a man, then his standing against sudden assaults and invasions that by the Devil and the world are made upon him. You may talk of this, but without much grace you will never be able to do it, &c.

Seventhly, and lastly, 'Tis your Principle,

That your hearts are to be ready for every work that God shall impose upon you.

You are not to choose your employment, neither are you to refuse any employment that God shall put upon you. You are alwayes to have an open ear, a ready hand, an obedient heart, and a willing cheerful soul to fall in with what work or service soever it is that God shall put upon you, this is your Principle. I, but tell me, Christians, will a little grace make a man to live up to this Principle? I judge not. You are to stand ready to change your employment from better to worse if the Lord shall be pleased to order it so. You are to be ready to change your Crown for a Crosse; to change that employment that's honourable, for that that's mean.

low; and that which is more profitable, for that which is less profitable; as it were from the ruling of a Province, to the keeping of a Household; from being a Lord, to be a servant; from being a servant to great men, to be a servant to the meanest servant, yea, to the poorest Beast. Certainly a little grace will never enable a man bravely and sweetly to live up to this Principle. Their hearts that are poor in grace, are like a wounded hand or arm, which being but imperfectly cured, can only move one way, and cannot turn to all postures, and all natural uses.

Weak Christians are very apt to three things.

To choose their mercies.

To choose their crosses. And

To choose their employments.

They are often unwilling that God himself should choose out their way or their work. But now souls that are rich in grace, they are at Gods beck and check, they are willing that God shall choose their work and their way, they are willing to be at his dispose, to be high or low, to serve or to be served, to be something, or to be nothing, &c. Now I beseech you, Christians, that you would seriously and frequently remember this. That there is nothing in all the world that is such an honour to God, and a glory to the Gospel, as for Christians to live up to their Principles; nor nothing such a reproach to God, and his wayes, as this, for men to live below their Principles, and to act contrary to their Principles. And you will never be able to live up to your Principles, nor to live out your Principles, except you grow rich in grace; therefore labour I say, labour as for life, to abound in grace, &c.

Now the fourth Motive is this, consider, *That souls rich in grace, are a mighty blessing to the Land and place where they live.*

There are no such blessings in the world to Parishes, Cities, and Nations, as those souls are, that are rich in grace. Oh they are great blessings to all places where they come, they are persons that are fit for the highest and noblest employments. There is not the highest work that is too high

Such a one
will be
Pater patrie,
Father of his
Country.

for a man that is rich in grace, not the hottest work that is too hot for a man rich in grace, nor the lowest work below a man rich in grace. Such a man will not say, I would do it, but that 'tis below my place, my blood, my parts, my education. May Christ have honour? May others have good? if so, I will do it, saith the soul that's rich in grace, whatever comes of it, and bless God for the opportunity. *Dan. 6. 3. Then this Daniel was preferred above the Presidents and Princes, because an excellent spirit was in him, and the King thought to set him over the whole Realm.* Why was Daniel set upon the Throne? but because there was a glorious excellent spirit in him, that fitted him for the highest employment. So Joseph was a blessing to his Masters family, and the people among whom he lived. No such blessings to people and places, as souls rich in grace. So in *Nehem. 7. 2. I gave my Brother Hanani, and Hananiah the Ruler of the palace, charge over Jerusalem, (and why he) for he was a faithfull man, and feared God above many.* Oh the wisdom, the prudence, the zeal, the courage, the compassion, the patience, the self denyal that should be in Magistrates! There is a truth in that old Maxim, (*Magistratus virum indicat*) Magistracy will try a man. None fit to rule, but such that are rich in grace. What a world of good may a man do with worldly riches, in a Parish, in a City, in a Nation? but that's nothing to the good that a man may do that is rich in grace. Oh the sins that he may prevent! Oh the judgements that he may divert! Oh the favours and blessings that he may draw down upon the heads and hearts of people! I presume you forget not what a blessing *Moses, Joseph, Job, Nehemiah, Mordecai*, and *Daniel*, proved to the people among whom they liv'd, and these were all rich in grace. A man rich in wisdom, rich in faith, rich in goodness, &c. Oh! what a blessing may he prove to ignorant souls, to staggering souls, to wandering souls, to tempted souls, to deserted souls? &c. Look what the Sun is to us, that may a soul rich in grace, be to others, &c. Oh friends! would you be blessings to your families? would you be blessings to the City, to the Nation? Oh then labour to be rich in grace, and do not think

think it enough that you have so much grace as will keep you from dropping into Hell, and that will bring you to Heaven, but labour to be rich in grace, and then you will prove indeed a blessing to the place and Nation where you live.

The *Romans* when they did perceive any natural excellency to be in any persons, though they were never so poor and mean, they would take them from their dinners of *Turnips*, and *Water-cresses*, to lead the *Roman Army*. 'Tis true, that naturall and morall indowments will inable men to doe much, but grace will inable men to do ten thousand times more. There's no work too high nor too hard for souls rich in grace; and therefore as you would be choice instruments in the Lords hand, and eminently serviceable in your Generations, O labour to be rich in grace. 'Tis not he that hath most wit in his head, but he that hath most grace in his heart, that is most fit for *Generation-work*.

Fifthly, *A rich measure of grace will bear out your souls in several cases, therefore labour to be rich in grace.*

A rich measure of grace will bear out the soul under great means of grace. When a soul is spiritually rich, this will bear it out under great means: Such a one will be able to look God in the face with joy and comfort, he can say, 'tis true Lord I have had more means then others, and loe, I am grown richer then others: Thou hast taken more pains with me, then with others, and loe, I bring forth more fruit then others, my five Talents are become ten. But a little grace will not bear men out under much means of grace.

Again, A great measure of grace will bear the soul out under a great name, as well as under great means. For a man to have a great name to live, and yet to have but a little life, is a stroak of stroaks, to be high in name, and little in worth, is a very sad and sore judgement: To have a name to be an eminent Christian, and yet to be poor in faith, in love, in wisdom, in knowledge, &c. is the greatest unhappinesse in the world. This stroak is upon many in these dayes. But that which is saddest of all, is this, they feel it not, they observe it not. But now he that is rich in grace, hath something within,

As those that were call'd among the *Romans*, the *Cu* *vii*, and *Ea* *britii*, &c.

The golden Name of Christians, is but as an Ornament to a Swine, saith *Salvin*. He means such as content themselves with an empty name.

Quid tibi prodest nomen, ubi res non invenitur? What will the name avail, where the thing is wanting, saith *Augustin*.

within, that will bear him out under a great name in the world.

Again, A great measure of grace will bear you out under great desires, as well as under a great name. A man that's rich in grace, may ask what he pleases, he is one much in with God, and God will deny him nothing. The best of the best is for this man, he may have any thing, he may have every thing that Heaven affordeth; He is able to improve much, and therefore he may ask much, and have it.

'Twas a sweet saying of one, *O Lord, I never come to thee, but by thee, I never go from thee without thee.*

Soxonem saith of *Apollonius*, That he never asked any thing of God, but he had it.

And another speaking of *Luther*, saith, (*Hic homo potuit a-pud Deum quod voluit*) He could have what he would of God. Rich men may long for this, and that, and have it, they have something that will fetch it, but poor men may not. O! now who would not labour as for life, to be rich in grace? O! this will bear you out under great means, and under great names, and under great desires, therefore rest not satisfied with a little grace.

But then sixthly and lastly, *Souls rich in grace are the glory of Christ, and the glory of Christianity.*

As 'tis the glory of the stock, when the grafts grow and thrive in it, even so it is the glory of Christ when those that are ingrafted into him, thrive and grow, This declares to all the world, that Christ keeps a good house, and that he doth not feed his Children with trash, but with the choicest delicacies, that he is open-handed, and free-hearted. 'Tis the glory of the father, when the child grows rich under him; and the glory of the master, when the servant grows rich under him; and so 'tis the glory of Christ, when poor souls grow rich under him. The Name of Christ, and the Honour of Christ, is kept up in the world by souls that are rich in grace: They are the persons that make others think well, & speak well of Christ. You may at your leisure read the first and second Epistles to the *Thessalonians*, and there you shall see what an honour they were to the Lord Jesus, & the Gospel, who

who abounded in spiritual riches. Such Christians that are like to *Pharaoh's* lean Kine, reproach three at once, God, the Gospel, and their Teachers. And this age is full of such Christians. 'Tis your greatest work in this world, to keep up the honour and the glory of the Lord, and this you can never, you will never do, except you labour to be rich in grace. Let others labour for the meat that perisheth, do you labour for that which endureth to everlasting life. When you come to dye, and when you come to make up your accounts, 'twill never be a grief (but a joy) unto you, that you have made it your greatest business and work in this world, to be rich in grace.

But here you may say,

What Means must we use, that we may grow rich in grace?

I Answer.

First, Let no discouragements take you off from labouring to be enriched with spiritual riches.

A soul that would be spiritually rich, must be Divinely resolved, that come what can come, he will hold on in the use of means, that he may be rich with the riches of Christ. *Joshua* was resolute in this point, Choose you whom you will serve, whether the Lord, or those other gods that your fathers served, as for my part, I and my house will serve the Lord. *Luke* 13. 24. Strive to enter in at the straight gate. The Greek word signifies, To strive with all your might, with all your strength to strive even to an Agony, to strive as they did for the Garlands, in the Olympick Games. The word here used, seemeth to allude to their striving for the Garland, where they put out themselves to the utmost. So in *John* 6. 29. Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you, for him hath God the Father sealed.

I have read of one, that did not fear what he did, nor what he suffered, so he might get riches: For, saith he, men do not ask how good one is; or how gracious one is; but how rich

Josh. 24. 15.

Agonizesthe. Many men are like *Cicero*, not thoroughly resolved in themselves, whether to follow *Pompey* or *Cæsar*; the riches of this world, or the riches of another world: such men will still be poor.

rich one is. Oh Sirs! the day is a coming, when God will ask how rich your souls are, how rich you are in faith, in wisdom, in knowledge, in fear, &c. and not how rich you are in money, or in Jewels, or in Land, or in goods, but how rich are you in grace? which should provoke your souls to strive in the face of all discouragements, to be rich in grace. What will not the Merchant do, and the Mariner do for these temporal riches? Oh the dangers, the hazards, the tempests, the storms, the deaths that they run through for earthly riches, which are never without their sting! And shall not Christians labour in the face of all oppositions, after spiritual riches.

It is reported of *Nevesan* the Lawyer, that he should say, *He that will not venture his body, can never be valiant; and he that will not venture his soul, will never be rich.* I am sure that man that will not venture, and venture hard in the face of all discouragements, to be spiritually rich, will never be rich, he may be good in the main, and may go to heaven in a storm, but he will never be rich in spirituals, that will not venture himself to the uttermost for the gain of spiritual riches.

Secondly, *Be fixed under a Christ-exalting, and a soul-inriching Ministry.*

Under that mans Ministry that makes it his businesse (not a thing by the bye, but his businesse, his work, not to tickle the ear, to please the fanſie, but) to enrich the soul, to win the soul, and to build up the soul. *2 Tim. 4. 3. For the time will come when they will not endure sound Doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap up to themselves Teachers, having itching ears.* This Age, yea, this City is full of such slight, light, mad souls, that love nor like nothing but what's empty and airy.

Junius confesses, *That in his time there was one confest, that he had spent above twenty years in trying Religions, pretending that Scripture, Try all things, and hold fast that which is good.* 'Tis sad to see how many in our dayes, under pretences of Angelical attainments, make it their businesse to enrich mens heads with high, empty, airy notions, instead of inrich-

enriching their souls with saving truths. If these are not strangers to that wisdom that is from above, I know nothing. *Prov. 11. 13. He that winneth souls is wise.* The Hebrew word signifies to catch souls, by using all Art and industry, as Fowlers do to take Birds. No wisdom to that which wins souls from sin, and the world, and that wins souls to Christ, and holiness, no teaching to this. Remember this, you will never be rich in grace, if you care not who you hear, nor what you hear. That Christ that commands you to take heed how you hear, commands you also to take heed who you hear. And every soul won to God, is a new Pearl added to a Ministers Crown, &c.

But you will say to me,

How should we know which is a soul-enriching Ministry, that so we may wait on it?

Take these three Rules.

First, Judge not of a soul-enriching Ministry, by the voice of the Minister, nor by the multitude of hearers that follow him, nor by his affected tone, nor by his Rhetorick, and flashes of wit, but by the holiness, heavenliness, and spiritualness of the matter.

Some Preachers affect Rhetorical strains, they seek abstractions, and love to hover and soar aloft in dark and cloudy expressions, and so shoot their Arrows over their hearers heads, instead of bettering their hearers hearts. Gay things in a Sermon, are only for men to gaze upon, and admire. What are high strains, and flashes of wit, new-minted words, and phrases, but like gay weeds, and blew bottles, to the good Corn? Truth is like *Solomons Spouse*, *All glorious within*, She is most beautiful, when most naked, as *Adam* was in innocency.

The Oracle would have *Philip of Macedon*, use silver Lances in winning an impregnable Fort, &c. but Ministers must not use golden sentences, strong lines, froth of wit. It is iron, and not gold, that killeth in the encounter. It is the steel sword, not the golden, that winneth the field, &c.

Velocahb

He is the best Preacher, not that tickles the ear, but that breaks the heart.

Non qui aures tetigerit, sed qui cor purgaverit.

Many Ministers are like empty Orators that have a flood of words, and a drop of matter.

Multa loquuntur & nihil dicunt.

Non quanta eloquentia sed quanta evidentia. Aug.

Optimus Testaturus est optimus. Theologus.

*Agitatus ne-
ver relished
any dish bet-
ter, then what
was distast
by others.
So do serious
experienced
Saints relish
those very
truths best,
that such cor-
rupt Teach-
ers distast
most, &c.*

Rom. I. 18.

*Melior est ut
nos reprehend-
am Grammatici
quam ut non in-
telligunt po-
puli. Aug. in
Psal. 138.
Christ and his
Apostles la-*

Secondly, Judge of it by its revealing the whole council of God, the whole will of God revealed in his word.

In Acts 20. 27. *For I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God.* Some there be that make it their business only to advance the glory of Christ, and to darken the glory of the father; and some cry up the glory of the father, and yet cast clouds and darkness upon the glory of the Son. And what dirt and scorn is cast upon the Spirit, by many vain, blasphemous persons, in these times, is notoriously known; and if these men are not far from declaring the whole council and will of God, I know nothing. Christ must be held out in all his Offices, for they all tend to the enriching of poor souls, to the adding of Pearls to a Christians Crown. And clearly, 'tis sad to consider how many there be that cry up one Office, and cry down another: Some cry up the Kingly Office of Christ, but mind not his Prophetical Office; and some cry up his Prophetical Office, but trample upon his Kingly Office; and some cry up both his Kingly and Prophetical Office, and yet make slight of his Priestly Office. Christians, fix your selves under his Ministry that gives the Father his due, the Son his due, and the Spirit his due, that makes it his business to open the Treasures and the Riches both of the one, and the other, and to declare to you the whole will of God; for many there be that withhold the word in unrighteousness, and that will only acquaint you with some parts of the will of God, and keep you ignorant of other parts, whose condemnation will be great, as well as just, &c.

Thirdly, and lastly, You may judge of it by its coming nearest to the Ministry of Christ, and his Apostles.

There was no Ministry so soul-enriching, and soul-winning, as the Ministry of Christ and his Apostles. Oh the thousands that were brought in by one Exercise! Let men of frothy wits say what they will, there are no Preachers to these that come nearest in their Ministry, to Christ and his Apostles. (*Loquamur verba Scripturae*, &c. said that incomparable man, *Peter Hamus*) Let us speak the very words of Scripture, (for so did Christ, the Prophets, and Apostles) let us make use.

use of the Language of the Holy Ghost, and for ever abominate those that prophaneely disdain at the stately plainness of Gods blessed Book, and that think to correct the Divine wisdoms and eloquence, with their own infancy and Sophistry. Gods holy things ought to be handled with fear and reverence, rather then with wit and dalliance. Spirituall niceness is the next degree to unfaithfulness. No Ministry to that which comes nearest to Christ, &c.

The third Direction is this, *If ever you would be rich in grace, be rich in spirituals, then keep humble.*

Psal. 25. The humble he will teach his way, and the meek he will guide in judgement. James 4. He resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. He sets himself in Battell array against the proud, as the Greek hath it, but he gives grace to the humble, He poures grace into an humble soul, as men do water or wine into an empty vessel. Of all souls, humble souls do most prize spiritual riches; of all souls they most improve spiritual riches, of all souls they are most fearful of loosing spiritual riches. In Isa. 57. 15. Thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, with him will I dwell that is of an humble and contrite spirit, and that trembles at my word. The word there rendred Dwell, is an Hebrew Participle, and signifies Dwelling. Thus saith the high and lofty one, dwelling with him that is of an humble and a contrite spirit. The word notes to us thus much. That God will not dwell with an humble man, as a wayfaring man dwels with his relations, a few nights and away. Dwelling notes a constant, and not a transient act of God, God will for ever keep house with the humble soul, when once they meet, they never part. There is no such way to be rich, as to be poor and low in our own eyes; this is the way to enjoy his company in whom all Treasures are.

Fourthly, *Improve the riches that you have.*

Improve that knowledge, that faith, that light, that love that you have. Those that had two Talents, did by the improvement of them, gain other two; and those that had five, did by the improvement of them, gain ten, *Prov. 10. 4. The diligent hand maketh rich. Take hold of all opportu-*

oured to
make men
Christians,
and not Cri-
ticks.

Amiafferai.

Shechen.
Humility as
the Violet,
though the
lowest, yet
the sweetest
of Flowers.

The Radix
Harass, is to
dig in the
ground for
gold, whence
Harass, fine
precious gold
Prov. 16. 16.
The neglect
of golden
soulinriching
opportunities
hath made
many a mans
life a Hell,
yea, many a
Courtiers life
a Hell, as all
know, that
know any
thing of Hi-
story, &c.

Prov. 17. 16.
Wealth with-
out wit, is ill
bestow'd, &c.

unities to enrich your souls with spiritual riches. Men will easily, readily, greedily, and unweariedly close with all opportunities, wherein they may get earthly riches; and why should not you be as diligent in taking hold of all opportunities to enrich your precious souls? Is not the soul more then rayment, more then friends, more then relations, more then life, yea, more then all? And why then do you not labour to enrich your souls? Thou wert better have a rich soul under a thred-bare Coat, then a thred-bare soul under a silk or golden Coat. If he be a Monster among men, that makes liberal provision for his servant, his slave, and starves his wife, what a Monster is he that makes much provision for his base part, but none for his noble part? A sloathful heart in the things of God, is a heavy judgement. *Prov. 4. 31. I went by the field of the sloathfull, and by the Vineyard of the man void of understanding, (or as the Hebrew hath it, The man that had no heart, that is to make use of his Vineyard) and loe it was all grown over with Thorns and Nettles, &c.* Oh the lusts, the wickednesses that will overgrow sloathful, sluggish souls! Spiritual sluggards are subject to the saddest strokes. Oh the deadly sins, the deadly temptations, the deadly judgements that spiritual sluggards will unavoidably fall under! None such an enemy to himself, none such a friend to Satan, as the spiritual sluggard. 'Tis sad to think how the riches of Christ, the riches of Consolation, the riches of Justification, the riches of Glorification are brought to many mans doors, and yet they have no hearts to embrace them; no judgement to this. *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?* Well, spiritual sluggards, remember this, when your consciences are awakened, this will be a sword in your souls, that you might have been saved, you might have been spiritually and eternally enriched, but that you have trifled and fooled away golden opportunities, and your own salvation.

Fifthly, Walk uprightly, holily, and obediently.

If ever you would be spiritually rich, look to your walking. 'Tis not the knowing soul, nor the talking soul, but the

the close-walking soul, the obediential soul, that is in spirituals the richest soul. Others may be rich in notions, but none so rich in spiritual experiences, and in all holy and heavenly grace, as close-walking Christians, *Psal. 84. 11. The Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.* The upright walker shall be both of his Court, and Council, he shall know any thing, and have any thing. In *Joh. 14. 21. 23.* compared. *If any man love me, he will keep my Commandments, and I will love him, and my father will love him, (what then?) we will make our abode with him, and will manifest our selves to him.* Certainly they cannot be poor, that enjoy such Guests as these; they must needs be full, who enjoy them that are fulnesse it self. God and Christ are overflowing Fountains, and holy souls find it so.

Sixthly, Be most in with those souls that are spiritually rich.

Let them be thy choycest Companions, that have made Christ their chiefest Companion. Do not so much eye the outsidcs of men, as their inside, look most to their internal worth. Many persons have an eye upon the external garb of this and that professor, but give me a Christian that minds the internal worth of persons, that makes such as are most filled with the fulnesse of God, to be his choycest, and his chiefest Companions.

In *Psal. 16.* *My goodnesse extends not to thee, sayes David (now David speaks in the person of Christ), but to the Saints that are in the earth, in whom is all my delight.* There are Saints, and there are excellent Saints; now those are the excellent ones, that are most rich in Heavenly Treasures; and these you should make your bosome friends, your choycest Companions. *Prov. 13. 20.* *He that walketh with wise men shall be wise.* That is, he shall be more wise, more humble, more holy, and more abounding in all spiritual riches. The word *Relech* that is rendred *walk*, is an Hebrew Participle, and signifies *walking*; to note to us, that 'tis not he that talks with the wife, nor he that commends the wife, nor he that takes a step, or two, or three with the wife, that shall be

When my heart is coldest and highest, I present God to my soul under the notions of his greatness; but when my heart is loose and fearing, then I present God to my soul under the notion of his goodness; saith *Luther.*

Yer. vi. from
Zarsh.

The very
Heathen man
could say,
(Quando sci-
entia loquitur
mens animi
aperit) when
a wife man
speaketh, he
openeth the
rich treasures
and wardrobe
of his mind,
&c.

be wise, but he that gives up himself to the society and company of the wife, that shall be more and more wise, more and more gracious, more and more holy. He that cometh where sweet Spices or Ointments are stirring, doth carry away some of the sweet savour, though himself think not of it, The Spouses lips drop as the Honey-comb, *Cant. 4. 10. The tongue of the just is as choice silver*, he scatters Pearls, he throws abroad Treasures where he comes. *Prov. 15. 7. The lips of the wise disperse knowledge.* (The Hebrew word is a Metaphor from scattering abroad with a Fan, or from Seed-men scattering abroad of their seed in the furrows of the field) They scatter their light, their love, their Experiences, among those with whom they converse, as Seed-men scatter their seed in the field. Christ sayes his Spouses lips are like a thread of scarlet, with talking of nothing but a crucified Christ; and thin like a thread, not swell'd with other vain and wicked discourses.

The old zealous Primitive Christians did so frequently, and so effectually mind and talk of the Kingdom of Heaven, and of the riches and glory of that State, that the *Eth-nicks* begun to be a little jealous that they affected the Roman Empire; when alas! their ambition was of another and a nobler nature. *Psal. 37. 30. The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh judgement; for the Law of the Lord is in his heart.* *Prov. 12. 28. The tongue of the wise is health, his tongue is a Tree of life, whose leaves are medicinal.* No way to be rich in spirituals, like being much in with such precious souls, whose tongues drop marrow and fatnesse.

Utterance is a gift, and dumb Christians are blame-worthy, as well as dumb Ministers. We should all strive to a holy ability and dexterity of savoury discourse. If Christ should come to many of us, as he did to his two Disciples (in that last of *Luke*) on Sabbath-dayes, and other times, and say to us, as to them, *What manner of Communication had ye, or have ye?* Oh! with what palenesse of face, and sadnesse of countenance should we look? The story of *Laquere ut videam*, is common.

Speak

Speak that I may see thee, said Socrates to a fair Boy. When the heart is full, it overfloweth in speech. We know Metals by their tinkling, and men by their talking. Happy was that tongue in the Primitive time, that could sound out *Aliquid Davidicum*, any thing of *David's* doing; but much more happy is he that speaks out *Aliquid Christi*, any thing of Christ from experience.

Seventhly, If ever you would be spiritually rich, then take heed of eating or tasting of forbidden fruit.

This stript *Adam* of his Crown, of his Jewels, and of all his rich Ornaments in a moment, and of the richest and greatest Prince that ever breathed, made him the miserablest beggar that ever lived. O take heed of tating of poyson, of eating of poyson. A person that hath eat poyson, will not thrive, let him take never such wholsom food. The choycest Cordials will not increase blood & spirits, & strength, but the man will throw up all. Poor souls that have been tasting of poyson, are apt to find fault with the Minister, and sometimes with this and that, as the cause of their not growing rich in spirituals; when alas, the only cause is their eating of poyson. These are like him in *Seneca*, that having a Thorn in his foot, complained of the roughness of the way, as the cause of his limping. Sirs, 'tis not the Minister, nor this, nor that, but your eating of forbidden fruit, that is the cause of your non-thriving in spirituals. Sin is the soules sickness, and nothing more prejudices growth, then sickness. Christians, if ever you would be Trees, not only having the leaves of honour, but the fruits of righteousness, then take heed of sin, abhor it more then Hell, and flye from it as from your deadliest enemy, &c.

Eighthly and lastly, Be sure to maintain a secret Trade with God.

You know many men come to be very rich in the world, by a secret trade. Though many have not such an open trade as others, yet they have a more secret trade, &c by that they gain very great estates, as many of you here in *London* know by experience. Take it friends as an experienced truth, there is no such way under Heaven, to be rich in spirituals, as by

Bezan tells us, That the Tree of knowledge was *Fi. as. indica*, and that it bears many leaves, and little fruit: And so 'tis with those that tast and eat of forbidden fruit, &c.

Afts 10. 3. 9.
Gen. 28. 33.
Exod. 14. 15.
1 Sam. 1. 13.

Pfal. 62. 2, 3.
Pfal. 27. 4.
Pfal. 84. 10.
Mar. 6. 6.

by driving of a secret trade heaven-wards. 'Tis true, it's good for men to attend upon this, and that, and the other publick administration; for in all Divine administrations God shew's his beauty and glory. But such that delight to be more upon the publick stage, then in the Closet, will never be rich in spirituals; they may grow rich in notions, but they will never grow rich in gracious Experiences. Oh! God loves to see a poor Christian to shut his Closet door, and then to open his bosome, and pour out his soul before him. God hath very choice discoveries for souls that drive a secret Trade, the best wine, the best dainties and delicates are for such. And I never knew any man or woman in my life, that was richer in grace, then those that were much in Closet communion with God. Much of a Christians spiritual strength lyes in secret prayer, as *Sampson* did in his hair. Nothing charms Satan, and weakens sin, like this. Secret prayers are the pillars of smock wherein the soul ascendeth to God, out of the Wilderness of this world. Secret prayer is *Jacobs Ladder*, where you have God descending down into the soul, and the soul sweetly ascending up to God. No way to be rich in spirituals, like this, therefore be sure to maintain and keep up a secret Trade between God and your own souls. Oh let God hear often of you in secret. In *Cant. 7. 5. The King is held in the Galleries*. Oh! in the secret walks, the soul meets with the King of glory; Oh! there the soul hangs upon Christ, there the soul sucks and draws virtue from Christ, and there the soul is made rich with the riches of Christ. Christ is much delighted and taken with secret prayer. *Cant. 2. 14. O my Dove that art in the clefts of the Rock, in the secret places of the Sairs (that art got into a hole) let me hear thy voyce, let me see thy countenance; for sweet is thy voyce, and thy countenance is lovely*. Secret meals are very satisfying, and secret duties are very soul-enriching. Christians, set more close to this work, and if you don't thrive by it, tell me no more. And thus you see by what means you may grow rich in grace.

The third thing I propounded to speak to, was,

Some

Some Propositions concerning Spiritual Riches.

And the first Proposition is this.

ALL that doe grow rich in grace, they grow rich gradually.

The Sun ascends by degrees; Children, Plants, and Trees, they grow by degrees, so doe Saints in spirituals. It's true, many men, as to temporals; by the death of some friend, or this and that providence, grow rich on a suddain: But no soul that is rich in grace, but grows rich gradually. In *Prov.* 4. 18. *But the path of the just is like the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.* He proceeds from virtue to virtue, until at length he shines like the Sun in its strength. And so in *Mal.* 4. 2. *Unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing under his wings, and you shall go forth and grow up as Calves of the Stall.* *Hosea* 14. 5, 6, 7. *I will be as the dew unto Israel, he shall grow as the Lilly, and cast forth his Roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the Olive Tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return, they shall revive as the Corn, and grow as the Vine: The scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.* I shall but hint at this now, because I have spoken more fully to it already, &c.

The second Proposition is this.

Few or none are rich in all graces.

There are some men in the world that are generally rich, that are rich in Money, and rich in Land, and rich in Goods, but where you have one man that is a generall rich man in this sense, you have ten thousand that are onely rich in some one thing, as Money, Goods, or Land, &c. so it is here. 'Tis a hard thing (if possible) to finde a soule that's generally rich: That is rich in every grace, that's rich in faith, and rich in wisdom, and rich in love, and rich in patience, &c.

Some Propositions concerning Spiritual Riches.

No grace
growes alike
in all Saints.
In the Para-
ble some
brought forth
thirty, some
sixty, some a
hundred, &c.

Abraham was rich in Faith, and *Job* was rich in Patience, and *Moses* was rich in Meekness, and *David* was rich in Zeal, &c. but none of these were rich in every grace. And so in these dayes you may find one Christian rich in one grace, and another Christian rich in another grace, but where will you find a Christian that is rich in every grace? Such that are rich in some graces, are yet very defective and lame in other graces. The Saints once at *Rome* were richer in wisdom and knowledges, then the Saints at *Thessalonica*, *Rom.* 15. 14. And the Saints at *Thessalonica* were richer in faith, love, patience, and charity, then the Saints at *Rome*, 1 *Thess.* 1. 4. 2. 8. compared with 2 *Epist.* 1. 3, 4. It is with Saints, as with sinners, one sinner excels in one vice, another in another vice: So one Saint excels in one virtue, and another in another virtue; one is rich in joy, in comfort, another is rich in humility, in fear, another in faith and hope, and another in love, &c. And mark how this arises.

It arises sometimes from hence, that every Saint doth endeavour to excel in that particular grace that is most opposite to his bosome sin. Now every Saints bosome sin is not alike; it may be pride is one mans bosome sin, and hypocrisie another mans bosome sin, &c. Now its the very nature of grace to make a man strive to be most eminent in that particular grace that is most opposite to his bosom sin, and upon this account it comes to passe that one is rich in one grace, and another in another.

Again, Some Saints have frequent occasions to act and exercise such and such graces; others are called forth to act such and such graces; now the more any particular grace is acted, the more that particular grace is increased, frequent acts cause a stronger habit both in graces and in sins. If all Christians should be rich in all graces, what difference would there be between Heaven and Earth? what need would there be of Ordinances? and when would Christians long to be dissolved, and to be with Christ? &c.

The third Proposition is this.

Souls may be rich in grace, and yet not know it, and yet not perceive it.

The

The Child is Heir to a Crown, to a great Estate, but knows it not. *Moses* his face did shine, and others saw it, but he perceived it not. So many a precious soul is rich in grace, and others see it, and know it, and blesse God for it, and yet the poor soul perceives it not. Now because a right understanding of this, may be of much use to some saddened dejected souls, I will shew you how this comes to passe.

First, Sometime it arises from the souls strong desires of spiritual riches. The strength of the souls desires after spiritual riches, doth often take away the very sence of growing spiritually rich. Many covetous mens desires are so strongly carried forth after earthly riches, that though they do grow rich, yet they cannot perceive it, they cannot believe it. 'Tis just so with many a precious Christian, his desires after spiritual riches are so strong, that they take away the very sence of his growing rich in spirituals. Many Christians have much worth within them, but they see it not. 'Twas a good man that said, *The Lord was in this place, and I knew it not.* &c.

Again, This ariseth sometimes from mens neglecting the casting up of their Accounts. Many men thrive, and grow rich, and yet by neglecting the casting up of their Accounts, they cannot tell whether they go backward, or forward. 'Tis so with many precious souls, they grow in grace, and are spiritually rich, and yet by neglecting the casting up of their accounts, they do not know it, they do not perceive it, &c.

Again, Sometimes it ariseth from the souls too frequent casting up of its accounts. If a man should cast up his Accounts once a week, or once a month, he may not be able to discern that he doth grow rich, and yet he may grow rich; but let him compare one year with another, and he shall clearly see that he doth grow rich. Though most are to blame for neglecting the casting up of their accounts, yet some are to blame for casting up their Accounts too often; for by this means they are not able to perceive their spiritual growth, and so can neither be so thankful, nor so cheerful as otherwise they might. Let there be some considerable time between your casting up of your accounts, & you will

The Sun ascends without perception, and so 'tis often in this supernatural motion, &c. The Greeks derive their word for desire, from a root that signifies to burn. Now if one should heap never so much fuel upon a fire, it would not quench it, but kindle it the more. The Application is easie. Gen. 28.

Seneca reports of one *Sevius*, that he would every night ask himself these three Questions, 1 What evil hath thou healed this day? 2 What vice hath thou stood against this day? 3 In what part art thou bettered this day? &c.

find that your souls are grown rich, though for the present you perceive it not.

But then again, Sometimes it ariseth from the souls mistake in casting up of its accounts. The soul many times mistakes, 'tis in a hurry, and there the soul puts down ten for a hundred, and a hundred for a thousand; as sometimes men in hurrying over their Books, they slip and make mistakes, and so they think there's nothing got, whereas indeed there's much got, and in the close they shall find it so. Many a gracious soul many times takes a great deal of grace for a little, and a little grace, for no grace. Look as Hypocrites put down their Counters for gold, their pence for pounds, and allwayes prize themselves above the Market, so sincere souls do often put down their pounds for pence, their thousands for hundreds, and still prize themselves below the Market, &c.

The fourth Proposition is this.

That Saints must endeavour to grow rich in every grace.

'Tis the duty and the glory of Saints, to endeavour to grow rich in every grace. So the Apostle, 2 Per. 1. 5. to 12. *Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, &c.* It is the work, the duty, the glory of a Christian, to be still adding one grace to another. So in Chap. 3. 18. *Grow in grace* (that is, in every grace, but more particularly and specially) *in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

Grow in grace. That is, grow in love, in faith, in humility, in meeknesse, &c. but especially *in the knowledge of our Lord & Saviour*, because that was a special remedy against the errors of those times, &c. All the graces that be in you, are weak, and therefore you had need to strengthen them all.

Again, You have the seeds of all corruptions in you, and is there any way to be rid of every sin, but by thriving in every grace?

Again, You have opportunities as well to thrive in one grace, as in another.

Again, Will not Satan labour might and main to keep your graces low and poor? You never hurt him lesse, you never honour Christ lesse, you never mind your work lesse, then

then when grace is weak and low. This he knowes, and therefore labours to keep your graces down.

Again, Are not you liable to several changes in this world? as to be rich and poor, exalted and abased, now to relieve, and anon to be relieved; now well, and anon sick; now strong, and anon weak; now in storms, and anon in calms; now tempted, and anon delivered; now in one condition, and anon in another condition; now up, now down; now forward, now backward, &c. Now pray tell me, doth not the several changes and variety of providences that we meet with in this world, bespeak us to be rich (not in some) but in every grace? Don't a state of prosperity bespeak a man to be rich in wisdom, rich in humility, rich in love, and rich in compassion? that his heart may be kept close to God in that state, and that he may do nothing unworthy of God, who hath done so much for him. And now when God shall change the manner of his administrations toward such a man, when God shall put out his Candle, pull off his Riches, and cloath him with rags, and set him with *Job*, upon the dunghil, don't this condition bespeak much patience, much contentation, much self-denial, much faith? how else will this man bravely bear up, when God shall write such bitter things against him, and passe the sentence of death upon his nearest and his dearest comforts? If a man be not rich in one grace, as well as in another, when God shall bring changes upon him, and pour him from vessel to vessel, his life will be a burden, a Hell to him, &c.

Again, consider this, growing rich in every grace renders a Christian most lovely and beautiful in grace. As a groweth in all the members of the body, renders the body most lovely and beautiful; the perfect beauty and comeliness of the body rises from the symmetry and fitness of the parts unto one another. Rare and excellent beauty ariseth from the comeliness of all parts; if one part be comely, and another deformed, then there is no perfect beauty. Well, remember this, there's no such beautiful Christians, as those that grow rich in every grace. Oh! they are the beauty of Christ, the honour of the Gospel, and the glory of Christianity.

Whilest *Pompey* prosper'd,
& *Rome* flourish'd, *Cæsar*
stoutly held and defended
a Divine providence; but
when he saw *Pompey* over-
thrown by *Cæsar*, his body
cast upon the shore,
without honour of buriall,
& himself exposed to
the danger of *Cæsar's* Army;
he changed his opinion,
denying that there was a
Divine providence, but
that all things fell out by
chance, &c.

And so much for the fourth Proposition, viz. *That we must labour to be rich in every grace.*

The fifth Proposition that I shall lay down, is this.

Saints should labour more particularly, and more especially to be rich in faith.

Though 'tis of concernment to believers, to be rich in every grace, yet it is of special concernment to them to labour to be rich in this particular grace of faith. In Jude, vers. 20. *Building up your selves in your most holy faith.* 'Tis not enough to have faith, but they must build up themselves, and build up one another in this most holy faith.

There are three things that the Scripture calls precious.

First, The Blood of Christ. In 1 Pet. 1. 19. *Ye are not redeemed with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot.*

Secondly, The Promises are called precious Promises, 2 Pet. 1. 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promises.*

Thirdly, Faith is called precious faith, Vers. 11. *Unto them that have obtained like precious faith with us.* Now though it be of concernment for every Saint to labour to be rich in every grace, yet more especially and more particularly to be rich in this grace of faith, and that upon this account that follows.

First, Because that faith is the souls greatest and choicest fence against her worst enemies.

In Ephes. 6. 16. *Above all, take the shield of faith, whereby ye may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.*

Above all, take the shield of faith. Neglect no part of your Armour, but above all look to the shield of faith. Look what the shield is to the body, that is faith to a believers soul, to secure him against all the fierce and fiery darts of Satan.

It is reported of Satan, that he should say of a learned man, *"Thou dost always overcome me. When I would exalt and promote thee, thou keepest thy self in humility; and when I would*

throw thee down, thou livest thy self upon assurance of faith. Faith makes the soul invincible, it makes the soul victorious, it leads captivity captive, it binds Satan in Chains, it foiles him at every weapon; and therefore above all labour to be rich in faith.

Secondly, Growth in faith will advance the growth of all other graces.

All other graces thrive in the soul as faith thrives, and no otherwise. Be rich in this, and be rich in all; be weak in this, and be weak in all. Faith hath an influence upon all other graces, it is like a silver thread, that runs through a chain of Pearls, it puts strength and vivacity into all other graces. You never knew a man rich in any grace, that hath not been rich in faith. Every mans hope, joy, fear, love, humility, patience, &c. is as his faith is. In Heb. 11. 1. Faith is the evidence of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for. Or as the Greek hath it, The substance of things hoped for. All other graces live upon faiths cost and charge. Look what the breast is to the child, wings to the Bird, oyl to the wheels, and the soul to the body, that is faith to all other graces in the soul of man.

It is reported of the Christall, that it hath such a virtue in it, that the very touching of it quickens other stones, and puts a lustre and a beauty upon them. I am sure 'tis true of faith, there is such a Divine virtue and power in faith, that it will quicken and cast a lustre and a beauty upon all other graces in the soul of man; and therefore you should labour as for life, to be rich in this particular grace of faith.

Thirdly, consider this, Of all graces that be in the soul of man, faith is the most usefull grace, and therefore you should above all labour to be rich in faith.

'Tis a Christians right eye, without which he cannot see for Christ; 'tis his right hand, without which he cannot do for Christ; 'tis his tongue, without which he cannot speak for Christ; 'tis his very vital spirits, without which he cannot act for Christ.

Some say that King Midas had obtained of the gods, that whatsoever he touch'd should be turn'd into gold. I am sure that

Psal. 63. 1.
Psal. 89. 25.
John 20. 28.

that whatever faith toucheth, it turneth into gold, that is, into our good. If our faith touches the Promises, it turns them into our good; whatsoever faith layes its hand upon, it appropriates to it self, and turns it into the soules good. If faith looks upon God, it saith, *This God is my God for ever and ever, and he shall be my guide unto death.* When it looks upon Christ, it saith with *Thomas, My Lord, and my God.* When it looks upon the Crown of righteousness, it saith, *This Crown is laid up for me, &c.* Faith is bread to nourish us, and wine to cheer us, and a Cordial to strengthen us. Faith is a sword to defend us, a guide to direct us, a staffe to support us, a Plaister to heal us, a friend to comfort us, and a golden key to open Heaven unto us. Faith of all graces is the most useful grace to the soul of man. *Without faith it is impossible to please God.* All those services are lost, wherein faith hath not a hand. You may write losse upon all the prayers you make, and upon all the Sermons you hear, and upon all the tears you shed, and upon all the Alms you give, if all be not managed by a hand of faith.

Heb. 11. 6.
Heb. 4. 2.

Fourthly, You should labour above all to be rich in faith, because faith is that Princely grace that Christ is most taken with.

Cant. 4. 9. Thou hast ravished my heart, my Sister, my Spouse, thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, (that is, with that piercing eye of faith that looks up to my Mercy-sear) with one Chain of thy neck,

There are two things that with open mouth speak our Christ to be most taken with the faith of his people.

And the first is, His uncrowning himself, to Crown his peoples faith. Christ doth often take the Crown off his own head, and put it upon the head of faith, witnesse such passages as these (which are frequent in Scripture) *Thy faith hath healed thee, Thy faith hath saved thee, Thy faith hath made thee whole, &c.* Christ takes the Crown off his own head, and puts it upon the head of faith; and no wonder, for of all graces, faith takes the Crown off a mans own head, and puts it upon the head of Christ. Man naturally is apt to Crown any thing but Christ; he is apt to Crown his pray-
ers,

ers, and Crown his desires, and Crown his Indcavours, &c. Oh but now faith acts like a King of Kings, and uncrowns all, and sets the Crown upon the head of Christ.

And then a second thing that speaks out Christ to be most taken with the grace of faith, is this, That he overlooks all other graces in comparison of faith, as you may see in the *Canaanite woman*, *Mat. 15. 21. to 28.* The poor woman shews a great deal of compassion, a great deal of wisdom, a great deal of humility, a great deal of love, and a great deal of self-denial; but in the close saith Christ, *O woman great is thy faith, he is won to her even as thou wilt.* He doth not say, *O woman great is thy love*, nor *O woman great is thy wisdom*, nor *O woman great is thy humility*, and self-denial, nor *O woman great is thy patience*, &c. but *O woman great is thy faith.* He overlooks, as it were, all other graces, and sets the Crown upon the head of faith, *O woman great is thy faith.* So in *Mark 5.* the woman that had a bloody issue twelve years, comes to Christ for cure, and in the close of the story, saith Christ to her, *Woman, thy faith hath made thee whole.* He doth not say, *Woman, thy pressing hard to come to me, hath made thee whole*, but *Thy faith hath made thee whole.* He doth not say, *woman, thy earnest desires and indcavours to be made whole, hath made thee whole*, but *Thy faith hath made thee whole.* He doth not say, *woman, thy fear and trembling hath made thee whole*, but *Thy faith hath made thee whole*, &c. So in *Luke 7. ult.* *Thy faith hath saved thee, goe in peace.* Though she wept much, and loved much, yet Christ doth not say, *Thy tears have saved thee*, thy sorrow hath saved thee. He doth not say, *Thy humility, thy charity hath saved thee*; but *O woman, thy faith hath saved thee.* Christ overlooks all other graces, as it were, and casts a lovely eye upon the grace of faith, &c.

And then again in the fifth place, *Thou should above all labour to be rich in faith, because of all graces in the soul of man, faith makes him most lively and active.*

There's no grace, I say, no grace in the soul of man that makes him so full of life and action, as the grace of faith.

True faith puts forth it self into vital operations. *Ferdinando of Arragon* believed the story told him by *Columbus*, and therefore he furnished him with ships, & got the *West Indies*, by his faith in the undertaker. But *Henry the 7 of England* believed him not, & therefore trusted him not with shipping, and so lost all the purchase of that faith; which purchase may yet be recovered, if the Lord shall please to own and Crown the just & noble design of *General Pen*, &c.

*Mori posse
vinci non pos-
se. Cyp.*

Faith is the *Primum Mobile*, the first pin, the first wheel that moves all the golden wheels of obedience. In *Heb. 11.* you read what those *Worthies* did, they left their Countrey, their kindred upon a bare Command of God. Faith hath *Rackels* eye, but *Leahs* womb, it makes souls very fruitful in wayes of wel-doing. Faith is as the spring in the Watch, that moves the wheels; not a grace stirs, till faith sets it on work. Faith is like *Solomons* virtuous woman, that sets all her maidens on work. Faith sets joy on work. *Abraham desired to see my day, and saw it, and rejoiced.* Faith sets love on work, it works by love, *Gal. 5. 6.* It sets hope on work, *Rom. 8. 24, 25.* It sets godly sorrow at work, *Zech. 12. 10.* It sets patience at work, I believe that God is wise and loving, and what he doth is out of some noble design to do my soul good, this spins out patience. Faith fits a man to do, to suffer, to wait, to walk, &c. therefore labour above all to be rich in faith.

And then sixthly, Of all graces, faith renders the soul most invincible, and therefore you should labour above all, to be rich in faith.

It renders the soul invincible and unconquerable under all the hardships and tryals it meets with in this world. Faith makes a man triumph in all the changes and conditions of this life. It was their faith that made them invincible in *Dan. 3. 16, 17, 18.* O *Nebuchadnezzar*, we are not carefull to answer thee in this matter, if it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King. But if not, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship thy golden Image which thou hast set up. And so *Daniels* faith stoppt the Lyons mouths, it made him too strong for the strongest Beasts of prey, as you may see in *Dan. 6.* Though the Enemies of a believer are very subtle, strong, and experienced, and though the Battel be hot and long, yet a soul rich in faith shall have the day. Faith will render a believer victorious in the close: He may suffer death (as *Cyprian* said to *Cornelius*) but never conquest. Faith renders the soul a Lyon, a Rock, &c. It is reported of some of the *Roman* and *Grecian*

Grecian Captains, That they proved alwayes victorious, & were never beaten by any. Such is the nature of faith, it renders a soul victorious in all ingagements: In all ingagements faith brings a man bravely off, and inables him to keep his ground, and triumph. *Psal. 60. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. God hath spoken in his holinesse, I will rejoyce, I will divide Shechem, and meet out the Valley of Succoth. Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine, Ephraim also is the strength of my head, Judah is my Law-giver, Moab is my wash-pot, over Edom will I cast out my shoe, Philistia triumph thou because of me, &c.* 'Tis not great resolutions, nor big words, nor high looks, but faith, that will make a man stand fast in shaking times. No hand can put the Garland upon a Christian, but the hand of faith, &c.

As may be fully seen in the Book of Martyrs, and in Heb. 11.

Faith alters the Tenses, it puts the future into the present, *Gilead is mine, &c.*

And then seventhly, *Above all labour to be rich in faith, because Satan will labour might and main to weaken your faith.*

Oh! the great design of Satan is not so much to weaken you in externals, as it is to weaken you in internals. Satan can be contented that men should have their heads full of notions, and their mouths full of Religion, and their bags full of gold, and their chests full of silver, and their shops full of wares, so their souls be either void of faith, or but poor and low in faith. Satans greatest plot is to weaken the faith of Christians, *Luke 22. 31, 32. And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith faile not. Satan hath an akeing tooth at thy faith, his design is upon that, he will labour might and main to weaken that, to frustrate that, and therefore I have prayed that thy faith fail not.*

Satan knowes that *Nihil resistet qui fidem perdidit.*

And then eighthly consider this, *Of all graces faith contri- butes most to the bringing down of mercies and blessings upon your selves and friends, and therefore you should above all labour to be rich in this particular grace of faith.*

Faith contributes to the bringing down of blessings upon our selves. In *Dan. 6. 23. Daniel was delivered* (faith the Text) *because he believed in his God. 'Twas his faith, and*

Were men
more rich in
faith, they
would be
more rich in
other blessings,
&c.

Gen. 39.

not his prayers; 'twas his faith, and not his tears; 'twas his faith, and not his sighs, that stopp'd the Lyons mouths, and wrought deliverance for him. So in *Psal. 17. 13.* I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the Land of the living. So in *2 Chron. 20. 20.* Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his Prophets, so shall ye prosper, and so they did. That's a very famous Scripture to this purpose, *2 Chron. 13. 15, 16, 17.* Then the men of Judah gave a shout, and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to passe that God smote Jeroboam, and all Israel before Abijah and Judah, and the Children of Israel fled before Judah, and God delivered them into their hands: And Abijah and his people slew with a great slaughter, so there fell down slain of Israel four hundred thousand chosen men. (Here was a great slaughter; no wars, no slaughters comparable to those the Scripture speaks of.) And the reason is rendred, *vers. 18.* Because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers. And as faith is the only way to bring down a blessing upon our selves, so faith is the only way to bring down blessings upon our friends and relations. Though another man cannot be saved by my faith, yet he may be blest with many blessings, upon the account of my faith. In *Mat. 15. 22. to 29.* It was the Canaanitish womans faith that brought a blessing of healing upon her daughter. And so in *Mat. 8. 6. to 14.* the Centurions faith heal'd his servant that was sick of a Palsie, and from that very hour he was healed. The servant got well by his Masters faith. And so likewise, in *Mark 9.* the faith of the Father prevailed for the dispossessing of his Son. If thou canst believe (saith Christ) all things are possible. And the poor man said with tears, Lord I believe, help my unbelief. And presently Christ charged the foul spirit to come out of him, &c. A believing husband, a believing wife, a believing child, or a believing servant, may bring down (by the actings of faith) many a blessing upon their relations. Faith hath a happy hand, and never but speeds in one kind or another: It hath what it would, either in money, or moneys worth.

Apollonius; saith *Sozomen*, never askt any thing of God, either

either for himself, or his friends, but he had it. And one pointing to *Luther*, said, *There's a man, can have any thing of God that he will ask.*

And as faith brings down blessings upon our own heads, and the heads of our friends, so it often brings down wrath upon our enemies. There's nothing contributes so much to our enemies ruine, as faith doth. I am confident, it hath neither been Armies, nor Navies, nor Parliaments, that have had the chief hand in bringing down the proud and stout enemies of Christ, and Zion, in this and other Nations, but the faith of his despised people. One Enemy may stand before the face of another, but what Enemy can stand before the face and power of faith? That's a remarkable Scripture, *Heb. 11. 33. Who through faith subdued Kingdomes, wrought righteousness, obtained Promises, stopped the mouths of Lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the Armies of Aliens.* Other means were used, but that which did the work, and struck all dead, was faith, faith engages God in every encounter, and who can stand before a consuming fire?

Polibius speaking of *Horatius* his keeping of the field against his Enemies Forces, saith, *That his enemies were more afraid of his faith, then of his war-like strength.* And truly there is nothing that renders men more dreadful to an understanding Enemy, then their faith. Oh! 'tis brave for men to believe down the power of darkness, to believe down those that war against the Lamb, &c. No way to get an Enemy down, like this; nor no way to keep an Enemy down, like this. No way to save a Kingdom, like this, nor no way to keep a Kingdom, like this. The Nation is beholding to none so much, as to believing souls. Oh *England! England!* thou hadst long before this, been a prey to men that delight in blood, had it not been for the faith of the worm *Jacob*, &c? Christians, as you would have Christ go on, and do more and more glorious things for *England*, as you would be crown'd with the choicest and the chiefest blessings, and as you would have vengeance executed upon all

Faith hath a kind of Omnipotency in it, it's able to do all things, &c.

Mary Queen of Scots, that was mother to King *James* was wont to say, That she feared Master *Knox* prayers (who was a man of much faith) more then an Army of ten thousand men.

that hate, that wage war against, and persecute Christ and the Saints, be mighty in believing.

Ninthly and lastly, *Faith is a root grace, and will the branches flourish, if the root wither?*

Oh therefore water this root, have an eye to this root. If you have a choyce root in any of your Gardens; Oh how careful are you of it? you will mind it, and water it, and look to it, &c. Well, of all graces faith is the root grace, and if this dye you will find your graces to languish; your hope, love, fear, patience, humility, joy, &c. can never outlive your faith; these live together, and they dye together; therefore above all labour to be rich in faith, for this is a root grace, and if this flourish, all other graces will flourish; but if this decay, all other graces will loose their strength, beauty, and glory, &c.

And thus much for the fifth Proposition. We come now to the sixth Proposition, and that is this.

That no gracious souls do at all times alike grow and thrive in spiritual riches.

A Child sometimes shoots up more in a month, then he doth at other times in many months; and sometimes more in a year, then he does afterwards in many years. So many a Christian thrives more, and gets more spiritual riches in one month, then in many; in one year, then in many. I appeal to your Experiences, Christians, don't you find it so? I know you doe. To cite Scripture to prove this, would be to cast water into the Sea, and to light Candles to see the Sun at noon. Sin and Satan doe sometimes work more violently, and more strongly in the souls of Saints, then at other times. Now when sin and Satan work most, and prevail most, then grace thrives least. As the life of grace is the death of sin, and the growth of grace the decay of sin, so the increase of sin is the decay of grace, and the strengthening of sin, is the weakening of grace.

Again, No Saints have at all times alike gales of the Spirit of God, and therefore they do not grow in spiritual riches at all times alike. A man thrives in spiritual riches as the gales of the Spirit of God are upon him, and no other-wise;

And don't
Plants and
Trees some-
times shoot
up more in a
week, then in
many, &c.

No ship have
at all times
the same gales
of wind, &c.

wife; When the Spirit of the Lord doth blow most sweetly and strongly upon his heart, then his graces thrive and flourish most, then those beds of spices do yield the most fragrant smell; but when the Spirit of the Lord doth withdraw, and withhold his influences, how doth the strength and glory of grace wither and decay?

The Herb *Heliotropium* doth turn about, and open and shut, according to the motion of the Sun, so do the graces of the Saints according to the internal gales, motions, and operations of the Spirit, &c.

Again, No Saints have at all times the like external advantages and opportunities of growing rich in spirituals. They have not the word, it may be, in that power and life, as formerly; or it may be they enjoy not the communion of Saints, as formerly, or if they do, yet perhaps those that have formerly been as fire to warm and inflame them, are now become water to cool them, and deaden them; or it may be they have not those advantages for Closet duties, as formerly, or it may be the course of nature is changed, and if so, 'tis no wonder that they thrive not in spirituals as formerly. When Children have not as good food, and as good lodging, & as good looking after, as at other times, no wonder if they thrive not, as at other times. When men have not the same advantages and opportunities to grow rich in the world as formerly, do we wonder that they thrive not as before? surely no.

And sometimes this arises from the breaking of some bone by sin, *David* found it so. Many a man by breaking a bone is much hindered from thriving in the world. O this broken arm, this broken leg, hath cost me many a fair pound, which otherwise I might have got. O friends, sin is the breaking of the bones, the breaking of a mans peace and communion with God, 'tis the breaking of his hope and confidence in God, 'tis the dis-joyning of a man from God, and so it hinders a mans spiritual growth. Believe it, Christians, if you play and dally with sin, if you fall in with sin, if you make one with sin, you will never grow rich in spirituals. Sin will cause such a breaking of bones, as will undoubtedly hinder the

Cant. 4. ult.

Lattimer said of the Spirit, That 'tis coming and going, &c.

Psal. 50.

Isa. 59. 1, 2.
Chap. 64. 7.
Gall. 6. 1.

the prosperity of your souls. And so much for the sixth Proposition.

The seventh and last Proposition I shall propound, is this, *A man may grow rich in those graces that are more remote from Christ, that are lesse conversant about Christ, when he doth not grow rich in those graces, that, as special favourites, stand alwayes at the elbow of Christ, and are most busied and conversant about Christ.*

Let me open it thus to you.

You know at Court there are some that have the honour to attend alwayes at the Princes elbow, and there are others that appertain to the same Prince, but are more remote in their employments for him, &c. So in the soul, there are some graces that are more remote, and not so conversant about the person of Christ, as now Humility, Self-denyall, Patience, Meeknesse, Temperance, Sobriety, and the like. Now though these graces do appertain to the same Prince, though they are all servants of the Lord Jesus, yet notwithstanding they are more remote, and busied about other objects, and things. O but now faith and love are choice favourites that alwayes stand at the elbow of Christ. Faith and love are Christs greatest favourites in Heaven. Now I say, a Christian may grow rich in those graces that are more remote from Christ, that are lesse conversant about the person of Christ, when he doth not grow rich in those particular graces that are most active about the person of Christ. He may grow rich in Humility, in Self-denyall, in Meeknesse, in Temperance, &c. when he doth not grow up in joy and delight, and comfort, &c. The Tree grows downward, when it doth not grow upward: So a soul may grow rich in some particular graces, when he doth not grow rich in other graces: He may grow rich in those graces that are more remote from Christ, when he doth not grow rich in those graces that are more conversant about the person of Christ.

And so I have done with these Propositions, the serious minding of them may prevent many Objections, and to many give satisfaction in several cases, &c.

The fourth and last thing prounded, was to give you

Some limbs
and branches
of a Tree
grow more
then others.

Some

Some Notes of a person that is
Spiritually Rich.

Clearly, As there are few worldly rich men to those that are poor, so there are few in this professing Age, that will be found to be spiritually rich, compared with the multitude of *Laodiceans* that swarm in these times. We have many that say they are rich, and that think they are rich, when the truth is, they have either no grace, or but a very little grace: And these five following things do clearly evidence it, &c.

Notes of a person that is spiritually rich.

First, *Rich men have more variety of Objects to delight themselves with, then poor men have.*

They have Houses, and Gardens, and Lands, and Cattel, and Silver, and Gold, and Jewels, and Pearls, and what not? to delight themselves with. Oh but poor men have not such variety of objects to delight themselves with, as rich men have. It's just thus in spiritual riches. A man that's rich in grace, hath more variety of spiritual objects, about which his soul is most conversant, then a man that is poor in grace. He hath more objects of love, of joy, of delight, of content, to busie and exercise his soul about, then others that are weak in grace. *2 Cor. 6. 10. Injoying nothing, and yet possessing all things.* A soul rich in grace, possessees and injoyes all things in Christ, and Christ in all things. They injoy all good in him who is the chiefest good, who is the spring and fountain of good.

Joseph in Pharaoh's Court, had more variety of Objects to delight him, then his brethren had to delight themselves in their fathers house, &c.

I have spoken largely to this already, and therefore shall content my self in giving you this hint. It stande you upon to inquire what variety of Objects you have to delight your souls in. But

Secondly, *Rich men can reach to those things that poor men cannot reach to.*

I would have such and such things, saith the poor man, as the rich man hath; I would fare as he fares, and wear as

he wares, and do as he doth, but my stock will not reach it. So a soul that is spiritually rich, can reach to those things that one that is poor in grace cannot reach unto. He can reach to those joyes, to those comforts, & to those contents, to those heights of communion with God, and to those Visions and apprehensions of God, that a soul that is not rich in grace cannot reach to. Oh! I would fain have that comfort, and that joy, and that peace, and that communion with God, and those Visions of God, that such and such souls have, saith a poor Christian, but I cannot, my stock will not reach to it. It is an Argument a man is grown higher, when he can reach higher then he could before, whether it be a beam, or a pin, &c. So its an Argument that a soul is grown rich in grace, when he can reach beyond what formerly he could reach unto; when he can reach beyond his enlargements, beyond his incomes, beyond his comforts, to a Christ; when in duty, he can reach above duty; when in an Ordinance, he can reach to Christ, above the Ordinance; when under enlargements, he can reach above enlargements, to Jesus Christ. Oh but now a man that hath but a little grace, he can rarely reach above his duties, above Ordinances, above enlargements, to Christ; he is very apt to sit down, and warm himself with the sparks of his own fire, and to feed upon ashes, as the Prophet speaks, &c. But now a soul that is rich in grace, sayes, Well, these Ordinances are not Christ, these refreshings are not Christ, these meltings are not Christ, these enlargements are not Christ; these are sweet, but he is more sweet; these are very precious, but he is most precious. And thus those that are spiritually rich, do out-reach all others, &c.

Thirdly, *Rich men can with more ease and pleasure bear burdens, then poor men can.*

When Taxes and Burdens are laid upon poor men, they sigh and struggle, & complain that they are not able to bear them, when rich men make nothing of them. So souls that are rich in grace, can bear burdens without a burden; they can bear crosses, afflictions, and persecutions, with abundance

Isa. 50. 11.
Isa. 44. 20.

A Tree that
is well grown,
stands it out
in the worst
storms, it
bends not, it
breaks not,
&c.

dance of ease, cheerfulness, and contentedness of spirit, they do not shrug, nor grumble, but bear the greatest trials with greatest sweetness, as you may see in *Acts 5. They went out rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus.* So *Paul, 2 Cor. 12. 10. I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. I take pleasure.* The Greek word is an emphatical word, it is the same word that God the father uses to express his infinite delight in his Son, *Mat. 3. ult. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: Or, In whom I am infinitely delighted.* The same word the Apostle uses to express the wonderful delight that he took under all his sufferings, he rejoices & leaps under all his burdens. O but now a soul that is poor in grace, he cannot bear a burden without a burden, every light affliction turns him, and sinks him, every Mole-hill is a mountain, every scratch on the hand, is a stab at the heart, every wave is a Sea, and the poor Christian sighs & groans and cries out: O no sorrow to my sorrow, no losse to my losse, no crosse to my crosse; but souls rich in grace act quite contrary, as hath been hinted, and proved, &c.

Fourthly, *Rich men are most envied.*

History and Scripture speak out this, as well as our own experience. The rich man above all others, is the greatest object of envy, and 'tis as true that such that are most rich in spirituals, are of all the men the most envied. *Moses and Aaron* were rich in spirituals, and Oh! how were they envied by *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram*, & other wicked wretches? *Ezra, Nehemiah, and Mordecai*, were rich in spirituals, and who more envied? Among all the Prophets and Apostles, those have been most envied, that have most abounded in spiritual worth; and to this very day, none are such objects of scorn and envy, as those that have most of Christ within. Men that have more leaves than fruit, that have a golden outside, but a thred-bare inside, are lesse envied than those that are *all glorious within*. Men of greatest excellencies, are the main objects upon which the eye of envy is placed. *Saul's* envious eye was placed upon *David*, and *Cains* upon *Abel*, and *Esaus* upon *Jacob*, and *Herod's* upon *John*,

John 8. 12.

Numb. 16.

*'Twas said of
Cesar and
Pompey, That
the one could
not endure a
Superiour,
nor the other
an Equall.*

Psal. 45. 13.

Socrates calls
Envy (*Sor-
ron animæ*)
The souls
Saw, &c.

and the Pharisees upon Christ. Envious souls are like the Ravens, that flye over the Sweet Garden, and light upon the stinking Carrion. Envy doth ever ascend, it never descends. An envious man can with more ease dye miserably, then see another live happily: An envious heart weeps to see others mercies, and joyes to see others miseries. An envious heart is like the *Meer-maid*, which never sings but in a storm and never mourns but in a calm. An envious man cannot indure those excellencies in others, that he wants in himself, he loves not any light that out-shines his own, any Crown that out-weighs his own, &c.

Cimon the famous Generall of the *Athenian* Commonwealth, hearing a friend of his highly commending his Martial Achievements, answered, *That they were not worthy of commendations, because they were not envied, &c.*

Fifthly, *Rich men are most tempted, and assaulted.*

God and Sa-
tan will try
to the utmost
those particu-
lar graces
wherein any
Christian do's
excel, &c.

Pirates doe not use to set upon empty Vessels, but those that are most richly laden: And Beggars need not fear the Thief, though the rich man do. Those that have been most rich in spirituals, have been most assaulted and tempted by Satan, witnesse *Abraham, Job, Joshua, Peter, Paul, yea, Christ* himself. The best men have alwayes been most and worst tempted; none so much in the School of temptation, as those that are most rich in grace. There are none that are such blocks, such mountains in Satans way, as these; none do him that mischief, as these, none are so active, and so resolute in their oppositions against him, as they, &c. and therefore none so assaulted and tempted, as they. And thus by these five things you may know whether you are rich in grace, or no.

Uso 2.

The next Use is this.

If the Lord Jesus Christ be so rich, then do not joyn any thing with him, in the great work of your redemption, and salvation.

There are riches enough in Christ to pay all your debts, and to satisfie Divine Justice to the utmost farthing, without being beholden to your prayers, tears, or humiliations.

Christ

Christ will be *Alexander*, or *Nero*, on earth. Kings love in comforts, power is impatient of participation.

When *Augustus Caesar* desired the Senate to joyn two Consuls with him, for the carrying on the Government of the State, the Senators answered, *That they held it a diminution to his dignity, to joyn any with so incomparable a man.* at *Augustus Caesar* was.

Suetonius.

Was it a diminution to his dignity, to joyn others with him in the Government of the State? And is it not a diminution of the dignity and glory of Christ, to joyn your actions and your indeavours with his blood, in the businesse of your redemption? In *Isa. 63. 3.* *I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me.* And in *Isa. 44.* *Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the Heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by my self.* 'Tis a sad reproach to Christ, to joyn any thing with him in the great businesse of your salvation, therefore abhor it more then Hell it self, let Christ be all in all.

We must say of Christ, as it was once said of *Caesar*, *Socium habet nominem.* He may have a companion, but he must not have a competitor, &c.

Again Thirdly,

If Christ be so rich, then take heed of three things.

Use 3.

First, Take heed of sitting down dejected and discouraged under any losses or troubles that do befall you, or that have or shall befall you for the name of Christ.

Christ is generally rich, he is able to make up all your losses and wants. *Phil. 4. 19.* *But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ,* as he did the widows vessel. The Fountain hath not the lesse water for the vessel it fills, nor the Sun the lesse light, for that it gives forth to the Stars; so the Lord Jesus Christ hath never a whit the lesse for what he gives forth unto his Saints.

When *Zelissians*, the King of *Polands* Generall, had lost his Hand in his service, the King sent him a golden Hand. Ah Christians! when you loose this or that for him, he will send you a golden Hand; if you loose a penny for him, he will give you a Pearl. Christ will not live long in any mans debt;

debt, if he should, he would loose his glory, &c.

Secondly, *If the Lord Jesus be very rich, O then take heed of despairing, by reason of your sins.*

I confesse, the least sin should humble the soul, but certainly the greatest sin should never discourage the soul, much less should it work the soul to despair. Read 1 Tim. 1. 13, 14, 15. and despair (I had almost said) if thou can'st. Despairing Judas perished, when as the murderers of Christ, believing on Christ, were saved. Despair is a sin exceeding vile & contemptible, 'tis a word of eternal reproach, dishonour, and confusion, it declares the Devil a conquerour, & what greater dishonour can be done to Christ, then for a soul to proclaim before all the world, the Devil a crowned conquerour? A despairing soul is *Adagor missabilis*, a terrour to himself, his heart a Hell of horreur, his conscience an *Acheldama*, a field of black Blood. He hath no rest at home nor abroad, at bed nor board, but is as if infernal Devils followed him in fearful shapes, terrifying & tormenting his perplexed soul. Eternity of misery feared or felt, begets that Monster, which, like *Medusa's* head, astonisheth with its very aspect, and strangles hope, which is the breath of the soul. As it is said, *Dum spero, spero*, so it may be inverted, *Dum spero, spero*, other miseries may wound the spirit, but despair kills it dead, &c.

Thirdly, *If Christ be so rich, then take heed of presuming.*

Take heed of taking encouragement to sin upon this account, that Christ is rich in grace and mercy. To argue from the riches of mercy, to sinful liberty, is the Devils Logicke. A soul that thus reasons, is a soul left of God, a soul that is upon the last step of the Ladder, a soul that Satan hath by the hand, and the eternal God knowes whether he will lead him. What the women sung of *Saul* and *David*, that *Saul* had slain his thousands, and *David* his ten thousands, that I may say of Despair, and Presumption, Despair hath slain her thousand, but presumption hath slain her ten thousand. Shall we sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? As the beams

of

Acts 2.

My sin is greater then can be forgiven, saith Cain. Thou lyest Cain, saith Augustine, for Gods mercy is greater then the sins of all men, and it's a great injury to God to distrust of his mercy.

Christ is a Lyon, as well as a Lamb; he hath a sword, as well as a Scepter.

1 Sam. 18. 6, 7.

Rom. 6. 1, 2.

of the Sun, shining on the fire, put out the fire, so the shinnings of Gods mercy on us, should extinguish sin in us, as the Apostle argues, 2 Pet. 3. 15. from Paul, Rom. 2. 4. Christ seems to say to souls, as *Ihesus* said once, *Goe* (sayes he) and tell *Creon*, *I hesus* offers thee a gracious offer, yet I am pleased to be friends, if thou wilt submit, this is my first message, but if this offer prevail not, look for me to be up in Arms. Ah souls! if you shall abuse the riches of grace, to a pr: sumptuous sinning against Christ, Christ will take up Arms, and you shall dye for it.

The next Use is this.

If Christ be so rich, Oh then open to Christ when he knocks.

Use 4.

Christ knocks by his word, and he knocks by his rod; he knocks by his Spirit, and he knocks by his Messengers, and he knocks by conscience; Oh open to him, for he is very rich: Though you shut the door against a poor man, yet you will open it to one that is rich, and why not then to Christ? who would fain have entrance. Rev. 3. 20. Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voyce, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

Behold I stand. I that am the King of glory, I that am King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. I that am rich in mercy, rich in goodnesse, rich in grace, rich in glory, I stand at the door and knock. I that have gold to enrich you, I that have eye-salve to inlighten you, I that have glorious Apparrel to cloath you, I that have mercy to pardon you, I that have power to save you, I that have wisdom to counsell you, I that have happinesse to Crown you, I stand at the door and knock.

Psal. 24. 7, 8, 9.
Rev. 17. 14.

If any man will open. If the Master will not, yet if the Servant will; if the Mistresse will not, yet if the Maid will; if the Parent will not, yet if the Child will; if the rich man will not, yet if the poor man will; if the Pharisee won't, yet if the Publican will;

I will come in, and will sup with him, and he with me. Jesus Christ hath the greatest worth and wealth in him; as the

the worth and value of many pieces of silver, is in one piece of gold; so all the Heavenly Excellencies that are scattered abroad in Angels and men, are united to Christ; yea, all the whole volume of perfection, which is spread through Heaven and Earth, is Epitomized in Christ.

They say 'tis true of the Oyle at *Rhemes*, That though it be continually spent in the Inauguration of their Kings of *France*, yet it never wasts. Christ is a pot of Manna, a cruise of Oyle, a bottomless Ocean of all comforts and contents that never faile: A Saint may say, *In having nothing, I have all things, because I have Christ; Having therefore all things in him, I seek no other Reward, for he is the universall Reward.*

Use 5.

And then again,

If Christ be so rich, then sit down and wonder at his condescending love.

That one so rich, should fall in love with such that are poor, wretched, miserable, blind and naked; that one so high, should look so low as poor we; that one so great, that one who is the Lord and Heir of all, should match with us that have nothing at all. *O the breadth, the length, the depth, the height* of Christs love to unlovely souls! to such that had neither portion, nor proportion, that had neither external, nor internal worth, that might in the least draw his love towards them. You were indebted to God for the cleaths you wear, for the bread you eat, for the houses you live in, the air you breath in, the beds you lye on, the ground you tread on, &c. Now for Christ to love such, and to be willing to bestow himself upon such nothings, O! how should this work them to spend their dayes in admiring and contemplating upon his kindnesse and goodnesse?

I have read a story of an *Elephant*, who being fallen down, and unable to help himself, or get up again, by reason of the inflexiblenesse of his legs; a Forrester coming by, helped him up, wherewith the *Elephant*, by the very instinct of nature, was so affected, that he followed this man, would doe any thing for him, and never left him till his dying day. The Application is easie.

Rev. 3. 17. to 21, &c.

Heb. 1, 2, 3, 4.
Phil. 3. 17.
18, 19, &c.
Ezek. 16.

Love is like
fire, very
operative.
Si non operatur, non est.

The

The next life that we shall make of this Point, is this.
If Christ be so rich as hath been discovered to you, then prize
Christ above all.

Use 6.

As the people prized David above themselves, saying,
Then art worth ten thousand of us; 2 Sam. 18. 3. so should
Saints lift up Jesus Christ above themselves, and above every
thing below himself. He that lifts not Christ up above
all, hath no interest in Christ at all. He that sets not Christ
above all, is not a Disciple of Christ. Luke 14. 26. If any man
come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and chil-
dren, and brethren, and sisters; yea, and his own life also, he cannot
be my Disciple. Surely they do not truly love Christ, who
love any thing more then Christ.

Austin saith,
He would
willingly go
through Hell
to Christ.

Certe non amā
illi Christum,
qui aliquid
plusquam Chri-
stum amant.

It was a notable saying of Jerome, If my father should hang
upon me, my brethren should presse round about me, and my mother
should sit and besore me: I would throw down my father, I would
break through my brethren, and I would trample upon my mother, to
come to Christ.

Other Saints have lifted up Christ above all their Lands,
relations, and lives, as you may see in Heb. 11. and so did a
multitude of the Martyrs under the ten Persecutions, &c.
As Pharaoh set up Joseph above all, and made him Gover-
nour of the Land, and as Darius set up Daniel over all, so
you must prize Christ, and set up Christ above all.

Remember a few things, that this may the better stick
upon your hearts.

First, A Christ highly prized, will be a Christ greatly deligh-
ted in.

Every soul delights in Christ, as he prizes Christ, and no
otherwise. The reason of reasons, why Christ is no more
delighted in, is because he is no more prized among the
Sons of men. Cant. 2. 5. As the Apple-Tree among the Trees of
the Wood, so is my well-beloved among the Sons. I sate down under
his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was pleasant to my tast.
The seeing of this object delights the eye of a believer, the
hearing of this object delights the ear of a believer, the
enjoying, the possessing of this object, delights the heart
of a believer. I sate down under his shadow with great delight.

The Apple-Tree is delightful for shadow, so is Christ, he is a shadow to poore souls when they are scorcht with troubles without, and terrors without. *Isa. 32. 2. And a man (that is, Christ) shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and as a covert from the Tempest, as Rivers of waters in a dry place, as the shadow of a great Rock in a weary Land.*

The Apple-Tree is delightful for pleasantness of fruit, so is the Lord Jesus, for thole pleasant fruits of righteousness and holiness that grow upon him.

And the Apple-Tree is delightful for varieties, so is Christ, for there are all varieties of excellencies in himself, *Col. 3. 10. It pleased the father that in him should all fullness dwell.* We delight in persons and things, as we prize them, and no otherwise. *Jonathan* highly prized *David*, and delighted in him accordingly. *Jacob* highly prized *Rachel*, and delighted in her answerably. You will delight in Christ as you prize him, if you prize him but a little, you will delight in him but a little.

Secondly, Remember this, *A Christ highly prized, will be a Christ gloriously obeyed.*

Every man obeyes Christ, as he prizeth Christ, and no otherwise. The higher price any soul sets upon Christ, the more noble will that soul be in his obedience to Christ. If Christ were more prized in the world, he would be more obeyed in the world. A soul that highly prizeth Christ, is better at obeying, then at disputing any command of Christ. If Christ wil command such a soul to step over the worlds Crown to take up his Cross, the soul will do it, as you may see in *Moses*, *Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26.* he sets a higher price upon Christs Crosse, then upon *Pharaohs* Crown. When Christs Crosse, & the worlds Crown, stood in competition, upon a bare command of God, *Moses* steps over the worlds Crown to take up Christs Cross. *He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.* And so *Abraham* upon a bare Command of God, leaves his Countrey, and his near and dear relations, he wholly resignes up himself to God, he puts his hand into Gods, and is willing that God should lead him whither he pleases, and do with him what he pleases.

Fre-

*Non parentum
aut majorum
auctoritas, sed
Dei dicitur
imperium.
Jerome.*

The Com-
mand of God
must out-
weigh all
Authority
and example
of men.

I remember an excellent saying of Luther, I had rather (saith he) fall with Christ, than stand with Caesar. And indeed every gracious soul that highly prizes Christ, will rather choose to fall with Christ, then to neglect his obedience to Christ. By obeying Christ we gain more honour then we can give, by kissing the Son we even command him, and make him ours, &c.

Thirdly, Christians, remember this, All the causes of prizing persons & things, are eminently & only in Christ, which bespeaks you all to set a very, very high price upon the Lord Jesus. You prize some for their beauty, why, the Lord Jesus Christ is the fairest among the children of men, Ps. 45. 3, 2 Cant. 5. 10. My Beloved is white and ruddy, & hath the best, or, the Standard-bearer among ten thousand. You prize others for their strength, why, the Lord Jesus Christ hath in him everlasting strength. Isa. 26. 4. Trust in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength, he is the Rock of Ages. You prize others for bearing their fathers Image, why, the Lord Jesus bears the Image of his father. Heb. 1. 3. He is the brightness of his fathers glory, and the expresse Image of his person. You prize others for their wisdom and knowledge; such a one is a very wise man, you say, and therefore you prize him; and such a one is a very knowing man, and therefore you prize him; why, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ, Col. 2. 3. In whom (saith he, speaking of Christ) are hid all the Treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The truth is, all those perfections and excellencies that are in all Angels and men, they all centre in Christ, they are all Epitomized in Christ. All the Angels in Heaven have but some of those perfections that be in Christ. All wisdom, and all power, and all goodness, and all mercy, and all love, &c. is in no glorified Creature, no not in all glorified Creatures put together. But now in Christ all these perfections and excellencies meet, as all water meets in the Sea, and as all light meets in the Sun. Others you prize for their usefulness, the more useful persons and things are, the more you prize and value them. The Lord Jesus Christ is of universal use to his people, why

Mellum vivam
cum Christo,
quam regnare
cum Cesare.

Christ's beauty
needs no
letters of
commendation.

Charakteres
hypoastiscos
autou.

The Character of his
subsistence.
A comparison
from the seal
of a Ring, the
form of which
is imprinted
in the wax.

Christ is Quicker
undroppable,
as Origen
speaks, whate-
ver we can
desire. If we
hunger and
thirst he is
Jehovah our
meat, the food
of the soul.

John 1. 8, 9.
Phil. 5. 14.

Christ may
well be com-
pared to the
Trees of the
Sanctuary.
Ezek. 47. 12.
which were
both for meat
and for Me-
dicine.

he is the right eye of his people, without which they can-
not see; and the right hand of his people, without which
they cannot do, &c. He is of singular use to all his people.
He is of use to weak Saints, to strengthen them; and he is of
use to doubting Saints, to resolve them; and he is of use to
dull Saints, to quicken them; and he is of use to falling
Saints, to support them; and he is of use to wandering Saints,
to recover them. In prosperity, he is of use to keep his
Saints humble and watchful, spotless and fruitful; and in
adversity he is of use to keep them contented and cheerful.
All which should very much engage our hearts to prize
this Christ.

Again, We prize things as they suite us; why, Christ
is not only a good, but aurable good. Christ is light to
inlighten us, and he is life to inviven us; he is riches to supply
us, and he is rayment to cloath us; he is a staffe to support
us, and he is a sword to defend us; he is bread to nourish us,
and he is water to refresh us, and wine to chear us, and what
would we have more?

Fourthly, Yet once more, that this may stick upon us,
let us consider, *That where we are highly prized, there we highly
prize.*

Why, the Lord Jesus Christ doth exceedingly prize eve-
ry believing soule, yea, even such poor weak Saints; that ma-
ny swell'd souls slight and despise, as persons of no worth,
because they want that light and knowledge, and those
parts and gifts that others have. We Christians, remember
this, Christ prizes you as the Apple of his eye, *Zech. 2. 8.* he
prizes you as his Jewels, *Mal. 3. 17.* He prizes you as his
Portion, *Deut. 32. 9.* *The Lords portion is his people.* He prizes
you as his glory, *Isa. 46. 13.* He prizes you as his Orna-
ments, *Ezek. 7. 20.* He prizes you as his Throne, *Jer. 40. 21.*
He prizes you as his Diadem, *Isa. 62. 3.* He prizes you as his
Friends, *John 14.* He prizes you as his Brethren, *Heb. 2. 11,*
12. He prizes you as his Bride, *Isa. 62. 5.* He prizes you a-
bove his Father's bosome, for he leaves that to do you ser-
vice. *John 16. 28.* Yea, he prizes you above his very Life; he
lays down his life to save your souls, *John 10.* Now O

who

who would not highly prize such a Christ, that sets such an invaluable price upon such worthless souls?

Fifthly and Lastly, consider, *That your high prizing of Christ will work you to value the least things of Christ above the greatest worldly good.*

It will make you value the least nod of Christ, the least love-token from Christ, the least good look from Christ, the least good word from Christ, the least truth of Christ, &c. above all the honours, treasures, pleasures, and glories of this world. *Psal. 119. 72. The Lion of thy mouth is better then thousands of gold and silver.* Luther would not take all the world for one leaf of the Bible. And O that a serious consideration of these things might work all your hearts to a high prizing of the Lord Jesus!

The next use that we shall make of this Point, is this.

If Christ be so rich, then trust to Christ.

Who will not trust a rich man? Every one strives to trust a rich man, *The rich hath many friends.* Why the Lord Jesus Christ is very rich, will you be persuaded to trust him? O trust him with your best treasures, with your choicest Jewels, with your names, souls, estates, relations. The Apostle was excellent at this, *2 Tim. i. 12. I know him (saith he) in whom I have believed, that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, until that day.* I have committed my soul to him, and my life to him, and my name to him, and all my mercies and enjoyments to him. The child cannot better secure any precious thing it hath, then by putting it into the fathers hands to keep. Our mercies are alwayes safest and surest, when they are out of our hands, when they are in the hands of God. We trust as we love, and we trust where we love; where we love much, we trust much; much trust speaks out much love; if you love Christ much, surely you will trust him much.

That was a notable bold exposition of Luther; *Let him that dyed for my soul, see to the salvation of it.* I have committed my soul to him, I have given it up into his hands, who is my life, who is my love, and let him look after it, let him take care of it, in feeling of that, he secures his own glory.

Use 7.

Prov. 14. 20.

Interpreters differ about the pawn or pledge which the Apostle committed to Godscustody. One saith, it was his soul. A second saith it was himself (which is all one.) A third saith it was his works. A fourth saith it was his sufferings. A fifth saith it was his salvation without doubt; twas all that was near and dear to him.

Christ's promises are ever performed, 2 Cor. 1. 20.
 2 His promises are ever performed, 1 Cor. 2. 9. & c.

Rom. 8. 1.
 Rom. 6. 14.

glory. Oh that Christians would trust in this rich Christ for a supply of necessaries. Is Christ so rich, and will you not take his word that he will not see you want? Will you trust a rich man upon his word, and will you not trust a rich Christ upon his word? Do you believe he will give you a Crown, and will you not trust him for a crust? Do you believe he will give you a Kingdome? and do you doubt whether he will give you a Cottage to rest in? Ha's he given you his blood? and do you think that he will deny you any thing that is really for your good? Surely he will not, he cannot.

Again, Trust him for power against all the remainders of sin in you.

Hath Christ freed you from the damnable power of sin, and from the dominion of sin? and will not you trust him for deliverance from the remainders of sin, Psal. 65. 3. *Iniquities prevaile against me: As for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.* O excellent faith!

Again, Trust him to bring you into the Land of rest.

Do you think that this Joshua is not able to carry you through all difficulties, dangers and deaths? Do you think that he will leave you to dye in the wilderness, who have already had some glimpses of Heavens glory? O trust to this Christ for the bringing your souls into the Promised Land. Christ would loose his glory, should you fall short of glory, &c.

Again,

If Christ be so rich, Then don't forsake him, don't leave him, don't turn your backs upon him.

Is there riches of Justification, and riches of Sanctification, and riches of Consolation, and riches of Glorification in Christ? Yes, why then do not depart from him, do not shake hands with him. That's a sad complaint of God in Jer. 2. 12, 13. *Be astonished O ye Heavens at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For my people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out Cisterns, broken Cisterns, that can hold no water. Is it madness and folly to flye from the Fountain*

You read of
 no Arms for
 the back,
 though you
 do for the
 breast. Phil. 6.

rain

tain to the stream, from the light of the Sun, to the light of a Candle? And is it not greater madness and folly to forsake the Creator, to run after the creature. O say as Peter, *Whither should we go, thou hast the words of eternal life.* To run from Christ, is to run from all life, peace, and joy; 'tis to run from our strength, our shelter, our security, our safety, our Crown, our glory. *Lev. 11. 10.* *Crabbs*, that go backward, are reckoned among unclean creatures. The Application is easie.

John 6. 58.

Origen coming to Jerusalem, after that he had shamefully turned his back upon Christ, and his truth, and being exceedingly pressed to Preach, at last he yields, and as he opened the Book, he happened to cast his eye upon that place of the Psalmist, *what hast thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.* Now the remembrance of his own folly so reflected upon his conscience, that it made him close the Book, and sit down and weep. Such as forsake a rich, a full Christ, shall have weeping work enough.

Pl. 50: 16; 17.

That is a very dreadful Scripture; *Jer. 17. 13.* *All you that forsake the Lord, shall come to be ashamed, and they that depart from him, shall be written in the dust.* Can you read this Text, backsliding souls, and not tremble? &c.

Again,

If the Lord Jesus Christ be so rich, Oh then all you that have an interest in him, labour mightily to clear up your interest, and to be more and more confident of your interest in so rich a Jesus.

Use 9.

My Brethren, 'tis one thing for a man to have an interest in Christ, and another thing to have his interest clear'd up to him. I do speak it with grief of heart. That even among such Christians that I hope to meet in heaven, there's scarce one of forty, nay, one of a hundred, that is groundedly able to make out his interest in the Lord Jesus, Most Christians live between fear and hope, between doubting and believing. One day they hope that all is well, and that all shall be well for ever; the next day they are ready to say, That they

they shall one day perish by the hand of such a corruption, or else by the hand of such or such a temptation: And thus they are up and down, saved and lost, many times in a day.

But you will say unto me,

What Means should we use to clear up our interest in Christ?

I'll tell you.

There are six singular Means that you should labour after, for the evidencing more and more your interest in Christ. And take it from experience, you will find that they will contribute very much for the evidencing your interest in Christ.

And the first is this, *Faithfully and constantly fall in with the interest of Christ.*

Holiness is the interest of Christ, the Gospel is the interest of Christ, the precious Ordinances are the interest of Christ, &c. Now the more sincerely and roundly you fall in with the interest of Christ, the more abundantly you will be confirmed and persuaded of your interest in Christ. Such souls as fall in with strange interests, or with base and carnal interests, may justly question whether ever they had any real interest in Christ. Christians, did you more sincerely and fully fall in with Christs interest, you would lesse question your interest in Christ, this would scatter many a cloud.

Secondly, *Be kind to the Spirit of Christ.*

Do not grieve him, do not slight him. If you should set this Spirit a mourning, that alone can evidence your interest, that alone can seal up your interest in Christ, by whom shall your interest in Christ be sealed up? O do not grieve the Spirit, by acting against light, against conscience, against engagements, do not grieve him by casting his cordials and comforts behind your backs, do not grieve him by slighting and despising his gracious actions in others, do not cast water upon the Spirit, but wisely attend the hints, the tokens and motions of the Spirit, and he will clear up the interest in Christ, he will make thee say, *My beloved is mine, and I am his.*

Thirdly,

The Primitive Christians did generally fall in with the interest of Christ, and they generally had an assurance of their interest in Christ.
Lam. 1. 16.
Phil. 4. 30.
Isa. 63. 10.
Spiritus sanctus est res delicata.
Psal. 77. 2.
1 Thess. 5. 19.
Cant. 2. 16.

Thirdly, *Labour more and more after a full and universall conformity to Jesus Christ.*

The more the soul is conformable to Christ, the more confident it will be of its interest in Christ. 1 John 4. 17. *Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldnesse in the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. As he, so are we.* The child is not more like the father, then we are like our Saviour. The child is the father multiplyed, the father of a second edition. Our *Summum bonum* consists in our full communion with Christ, and in our full conformity to Christ. O if men were more universally conformable to Christ in their affections, ends, designs, and actions, &c. they would have abundantly more clear, full, and glorious evidences of their interest in Christ. A more full conformity to Christ in heart and life, will make your lives a very Heaven, &c.

Fourthly, *Interest Christ in the glory of all you enjoy, and in the glory of all you doe.*

This is a precious way to have your interest in Christ more & more evidenced to your own souls. Such as are good at this, as are much in this, will find Christ every day a clearing up more and more their interest in himself. 'Tis not (usually) long night with such souls. O Christians! interest Christ more & more in the glory of all your graces, interest him in the glory of all your duties, interest him in the glory of all your abilities, as Christ doth interest you in himself, in his spirit, in his graces, in his riches, in his Titles, in his dignities, in his offices. Ah Christians! did you interest Christ more in all you have, in all you are, and in all you do, you would never be so full of fears, and doubts, and questions, about your interest in Christ, as you are. Your interest in Christ in all you have and do, will speak out, not only the truth of your love, but also the strength and greatness of your love; & where men love much, where they love strongly, there they do not question the truth of their love.

The Heathen gods were contented to divide their honors amongst themselves, and hence the Senate of Rome rejected Christ, from taking him to be a God, after that they had con-

As all good Orators endeavour to be like Demosthenes, so all good Christians, should endeavour to be like to Jesus Christ, for therein lyes their glory and perfection.

1 Cor. 10. 31.

John 1. 16.
Rev. 1. 5, 6.
1 Pet. 2. 9.

The mother that strongly loves her child, does not question the truth of her love to her child.

sulted about it. For (said they) if Christ come to be acknowledged a God, he will not share with the rest, he will have all himself: And so upon this reason they refused him. Christians, Christ will not have any competitor, he will rather part with any thing, then with his glory, *Isa. 42. 8. I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven Images.* Christ will rather part with his life, then with his honour; therefore let every Christian say as David does, *1 Chron. 29. 11, 12, 13. Thine O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the Majesty, for all that is in the Heaven, and in the earth is thine: Thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all: Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all: and in thine hand is power and might, and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.* And clearly friends, the more your hearts are led forth to interest Christ in all you enjoy, and in all you do, the more clear and glorious evidence you will have of your interest in Christ; let his honour and glory lye nearer and nearer to your hearts, and you shall see that he has set you as a seal upon his arme, as a seal upon his heart.

The fifth means to gain the knowledge of your interest in Christ, is, *By cleaving to Christ, and whatsoever is dear to Christ, in the face of all miseries, difficulties, and dangers.*

Its nothing to cleave to Christ in fair weather, when every one cleaves to Christ, when every one professes Christ; but to cleave to him in a storm, when every one runs from him, this speaks out a child-like disposition, it speaks out a Jacob's spirit. Surely he must needs have much of Christ, that nothing can take off from cleaving to Christ. When the soul saies to Christ, as Ruth said to Naomi, *Where thou goest, I will goe, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge, thy people shall be my people, and thy God shall be my God. The Lord doe please, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.* When neither the frowns of men, nor the reproach of men, nor the con-

Psa. 44.

Acts 5.

Heb. 11.

Dan. 3.

Acts 21. 13.

Ruth. 1. 16, 17.

17: 18.

tempt of men; nor oppositions from men, can take the soul off from cleaving to Christ; it will not be long before Christ speaks peace to such a soul. *Psal. 63. 8. My soul followeth hard after thee, thy right hand upholds me.* In the Hebrew 'tis, *My soul cleaveth to thee, or is glom'd to thee, as Jonathan's soul cleav'd to David,* and as *Jacob's* soul cleav'd to *Rachel*, in the face of all difficulties and troubles. Doubtlesse, when the soul cleaves to Christ in the face of all afflictions and difficulties, this carries with it very much evidence of its interest in Christ. In temporals men cleave to persons and things, as their interest is in them, and 'tis in spirituals also, Christ cannot. Christ will not throw such to hell, that hang about him, that cleave to him.

Sixthly, and lastly, *If you would know whether you have an interest in Christ, Then be very much in observing what interest Christ ha's in you.*

Observe whether he ha's the interest of a head, a husband, a father, or no; Christ ha's a general interest in all creatures, as he is the Creator and preserver of them: And he ha's a heads interest, a husbands interest, a fathers interest, only in them that have a saving interest in him. The interest of the head, the husband, the father, is the greatest interest, 'tis the sweetest interest, 'tis a commanding interest, 'tis a growing interest, 'tis a peculiar interest, 'tis a lasting interest; and really, if the Lord Jesus hath such an interest in you, you may be as confident that you have a real and glorious interest in him, as you are confident that you live. And thus much for the means whereby you may come to know your interest in rich Jesus.

Before I close up this discourse, give me leave to speak a few words to poor sinners, who to this very day are as far off from this Jesus, who is so rich in all excellencies & glories. Ah poor hearts! you have heard much of the riches of the Lord Jesus, and Oh that I could perswade with you to get an interest in this Christ; get this Christ, and you get all; misse him, and you misse all. 'Tis a matter of eternal concernment to your souls; nothing can make that man miserable that hath this rich Christ; nothing can make that man

Dabk inaphshi.

Shamma, one of Davids, worthies, stood and defended the field, when all the rest fled.

A Use of Exhortation to Christ-lesse souls.

1 Cor. I. 25. to
29.

Dan. 4. 17.
Luke 16, 22,
23, 24, 25, 26.
Mat. 13. 45,
46, 47.

Prov. 3. 11.

happy, that wants this rich Christ. In Prov. 4. 5, 7. *Get wisdom (that's Christ) get understanding, forget it not. Verf. 7. Wisdom is the principle thing, therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting get understanding. And so in Prov. 16. 16. How much better is it to get wisdom, then gold? and to get understanding, rather to be chosen then silver?* Hadst thou all the power of the world, without an interest in Christ, thou wouldst be but weak. Hadst thou all the wit and learning in the world, without an interest in Christ, thou wilt be but a fool. Hadst thou all the honours in the world, yet without an interest in Christ, thou wouldst be but base. Hadst thou all the wealth in the world, yet without an interest in Christ, thou wouldst be but a beggar, &c. Oh therefore labour for an interest in Christ: Oh turn the wise Merchant at last. The wise Merchant in the Gospel, parts with all to buy the Pearl, to get an interest in Christ. Oh! 'tis your greatest wisdom, 'tis of an eternal concernment to your souls, to sell all, to part with all, for an interest in the Lord Jesus. Oh do not deal with your souls, when Christ is tendered and offered to you, as sometimes simple people do when they go to Market, they might have a good pennyworth, but that they are loath to part with some old piece of gold, that ha's been given them by a father, or a friend; somewhat willing they are to have a good pennyworth, but unwilling they are to part with their gold. 'Tis so with many poor sinners, when the Lord Jesus Christ is presented to their souls, as a very glorious pennyworth, somewhat willing they are to have him, but unwilling they are to part with their old good, with some old sweet darling lust. But sinners, don't you deceive your own souls, sin and your souls must part, or Christ and your souls can never meet: Sin and your souls must be two, or Christ and your souls can never be one. Christ is a most precious commodity, he is better then Rubies, or the most costly Pearls; and you must part with your old gold, with your shining gold, your old sins, your most shining sins, or you must perish for ever. Christ is to be sought and bought with any pains, at any price; we cannot buy this gold too dear.

He

He is a Jewel more worth then a thousand worlds, as all know that have him: Get him, and get all; misse him, and misse all.

Now if ever you would get an interest in Christ, and so by gaining an interest in him, be posselt of all the riches and glory that come by him, then be sure to get your hearts posselt with these Nine Principles that follow.

And the first Principle is this,

That the great end and design of Christs coming into the world, was the salvation of sinners.

Get this Principle rooted in your spirits. *I came not to call the righteous (saith he) but sinners to repentance.* And in 1 Tim. 1. 15. *This is a faithfull saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.* Christ layes aside his Royal Crown, he puts off his glorious Robe, he leaves his fathers bosome, he takes a journey from Heaven to Earth, and all to save poor lost sinners. That which Christ had most in his eye, and upon his heart in his coming into the world, was the salvation of sinners. Lay up this truth, feed upon this Honey-comb.

Mat. 9. 13.
Mark 2. 17.

Secondly, Get this Principle rooted in your hearts.

Viz.

That none ever yet obtained an interest in Christ, but unworthy creatures.

When you are pressed to get an interest in Christ, you are ready to say, O I am unworthy, will Christ ever look after such a one, as I am?

I answer, Yes. For this is a most certain principle, *That none ever attained an interest in Christ, but unworthy creatures.* Was Paul worthy before he had an interest in Christ? What worthinesse was in Matthew, when Christ call'd him from the Receipt of custome? And what worthinesse was in Zaccheus, when Christ call'd him down from the Cyrenians Tree, and told him, that This day salvation was come to his

his house? Was *Manasse* or *Mary Magdalen* worthy before they had an interest in Christ? Surely no. Though you are unworthy, yet Christ is worthy: Though you have no merit, yet God has mercy: Though there is no salvation for you by the Law, yet there is salvation for you by the Gospel.

Again, Christ requires no worthiness in any man before he believes, and he that won't believe before he is worthy, will never believe. If you look upon God with an Evangelical eye, you shall see that he that is most unworthy, is most capable of mercy. A real sense of our own unworthiness, renders us most fit for Divine Mercy. This Objection, I am unworthy, is an unworthy Objection, and speaks out much pride and ignorance of the Gospel, and of the freeness and riches of Gods grace, &c.

Thirdly, Let this Principle dwell in you. *Viz.*

That Christ hath lost none of his affections to poor sinners, by going to Heaven.

Oh! how did his bowels work towards sinners, when he was on earth? And certainly they work as strongly towards them now he is in heaven, His love, his heart, his good will is as much towards them as ever. Christ is *Alpha* and *Omega*, the phrase is taken from the Greek letters, whereof *Alpha* is the first, and *Omega* the last. I am before all, and I am after all. *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.* Christ is the same before time, in time, and after time. Christ is unchangeable in his Essence, in his Promises, and in his Love to poor sinners.

Fourthly, Get this Principle riveted in your hearts.

That he is able to save to the uttermost, all them that come unto God by him.

Heb. 7. 25. *He is able to save to the uttermost:* That is, to all ends and purposes, perfectly and perpetually; he needs none to help him in the great business of redemption, he is a tho-

Such as shall
goe to prove
he does, must
make a new
Gospel, a new
Bible.

Rev. 1. 8.

Heb. 13. 8.
wide *Crossing*.

is, to sur-
vive.

The Original
word signifies
all manner of
perfection.

thorow Saviour, He ha's trod the Wine-press alone, Isa. 63.

3. Fifthly, Get this Principle riveted in your hearts,

That the want of such preparations or qualifications that many men lay a great stresse upon, shall be no impediment to hinder your souls interest in Christ, if you will but open to Christ, and close with Jesus Christ.

Rev. 3. 18. Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open to me, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. Pray tell me, At whose door was this that Christ stood and knockt, Was it not at the *Laodiceans* door? Was it not at their door that thought their penny as good silver as any? That said they were rich, and had need of nothing, when Christ tells them to their very faces, *That they were poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked.* None more unprepared, unqualified, and unfitted for union and communion with Christ, then these luke-warm *Laodiceans*, and yet the Lord Jesus is very ready and willing that such should have intimate communion and fellowship with him.

If any man will open, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. The truth of this you have further evidenc't, Prov. 1. 20. to 24. & Chap. 8. 1. to 6. & Chap. 9. 1. to 6. All these Scriptures with open mouth speak out the truth asserted, viz. *That the want of preparations or qualifications, shall not hinder the souls interest in Christ, if the soul will adventure it self by faith upon Christ.* I pray what qualifications and preparations had they in Ezek. 16. when God saw them in their blood, and yet that was a time of love, and God (even then) spread his skirt over them, and made a Covenant with them, and they became his. What qualifications or preparations had *Phid, Mary Magdalen, Zacharie, and Ly-don?* see. And yet these believed in Christ, these had a blessed and glorious interest in Christ, &c.

I, but some may Object, and say,

Some men there be, that would have men better Christians before they come to Christ, before they believe in Christ, then usually they prove after they are come to Christ.

Surely did legal Preachers seriously weigh the following Scriptures, they would not so vehemently

(I say not angrily) press the absolute necessity of such and such qualifications before faith in Christ, as they do. Mark 16. 16. John 3. 34. Heb. 11. 6. Rom. 14. 22. John 5. 11. Mar. 7. 17, 18. Mat. 22. 35. Rom. 8. 2. Gal. 5. 6.

What

Object.

What is the meaning of that Text, *Mat. 11. 28.* *(Come unto me all you that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.)*

Answ.

There is a three-fold Answer to be given to this objection.

First, Though the Invitation be to those that are weary and heavy laden, yet the Promise is made to coming, to believing.

The Dove found no rest till she returned to the Ark. No more will the troubled soul, till it returns to Christ.

Secondly, This Text shewes only this, That those that are burdened and bowed down under sin, and under the sense of Divine wrath, are to come to Christ, and that there is no way for them to obtain ease and rest, but by coming to Christ. But this Text doth not shew that only these must come to Christ, or that only these may come to Christ.

Adoro plenitudinem Scripturæ, Tertul.

Thirdly, and lastly, No one Scripture speaks out the whole mind of God, and therefore you must compare and consult this Scripture with the Scriptures and instances lately cited, and then you will clearly see, That souls may believe in Christ, and come to obtain an Interest in Christ, though they are not so and so prepared, nor so and so qualified, as some would have them.

Sixthly, Get this Principle rooted in your hearts.

Moses was faithfull in his Office as a servant, but Christ as a Son, *Heb. 3. 2.* to 6. Christ had never entered in to glory, had he not been faithfull in his Office, &c.

That Christ is appointed, and anointed by the father, to this very Office, of receiving and saving poor sinners.

Turn to *Isa. 61. 1, 2, 3, 4.* *John 6. 28.* And *Psal. 68. 18.* *Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also. (what for?) That the Lord God might dwell among them.* Christ has received gifts for rebellious sinners, for rebellious Sabbath-breakers, for rebellious swearers, for rebellious drunkards, &c.

That the Lord God might dwell among them. That is, that he might have near communion and fellowship with them.

Seventh-

Seventhly, Get this Principle rooted in you,

That it is the delight of Christ to give poor sinners an interest in himself.

He is not only able to do it, but 'tis his delight to do it. Christ's soul is in nothing more; witness his leaving his fathers bosome, witness his laying down his Crown, witness those many sufferings & deaths that he went through in this world: Witness those Gospel acclamations, *Mark 16. 16. Rev. 22. 17.* Witness those perswasive exhortations, and gracious imprecations and intreaties, *Ezek. 5. 3. 11. Mat. 11. 28. 2 Cor. 5. 20.* Witness Divine Injunctions, and Comminations, *1 John 5. 23. Mat. 11. 21.* Witness those pathetical lamentations, *Mat. 23. 37. Luke 19. 42. Psal. 81. 13.* And witness the inward motions and secret excitations of his blessed spirit, *Gen. 6. 3.* All which speak out his great willingness and delight to save poor sinners. So in *Psal. 40. 7, 8. I delight to do thy will, O my God, thy Law is in my heart.* Or as the Hebrew hath it, *'I is in the midst of my bowels.* Now (mark) the will of the father was the salvation of sinners: This was the will of the Father, *That Jesus Christ should seek and save them that are lost, Mat. 18. 11.* Now saith Christ, *I delight to do thy will, O my God.* 'Tis the joy and rejoycing of my heart, to be a seeking, and a saving lost sinners. When Christ was an hungry, he went not into a vittualling-house, but into the Temple, and taught the people most part of the day, to shew how much he delighted in the salvation of sinners, &c.

Eighthly, Get this Principle riveted in your hearts,

That as there is nothing in Christ to discourage you from looking after an interest in him, so there is every thing in Christ that may encourage you to get an interest in him.

Look upon his Name, *Thy name is an Ointment poured out, and therefore do the Virgins love thee.* The name of

Christ did so much delight, and his heart was so much set upon the conversion & salvation of the Samaritans, That he neglected his own body, to save their souls, as you may clearly see in *John 4.*

מִי כִיךָ

Cant. 1. 3. The name of a Saviour is honey in the mouth, and musick in the ear, and a jubile in the heart, saith one.

Jesus hath a thousand treasures of joy & comfort in it, saith *Chrysostome*, and so hath all his other names. If you look upon Christ in his natures, in his offices, in his graces, in his beauties, in his gifts, and in his works, you will find nothing but what may incourage you to believe in him, and to resign up your selves to him. Ah poor sinners! what would you have? Is there not power in Christ to support you, and mercy in Christ to pardon you, and grace in Christ to heal you, and goodness in Christ to relieve you, and happiness in Christ to Crown you, and what would you have more? Oh that you would believe!

Ninthly, Let this Principle be rooted in you,

That the surest way, and the shortest cut to mercy, and so get an interest in Christ, is by a peremptory saying of the soule (by faith) on Christ.

There's no way under heaven to be interested in Christ, but by believing: There's no way to get an interest in the riches of Christ, but this, *He that believes shall be saved*, let his sins be never so great, and he that believes not, shall be damned, let his sins be never so little. And so much shall suffice to have spoken concerning this great and weighty Point. I shall follow what hath been said, with my prayers, that what ha's been said may work for your internall and eternall welfare, &c.

John 3. 16, 17,
18, 36. & 8. 24.
& 16. 9. & 4.
50, 52. & 5.
24. & 6. 35, 40.
& 7. 38. & 11.
25, 26. & 12.
46.
Acts 10. 43.
Rom. 3. 26.
1 John 5. 10,
11, 12.

EPHES.



EPHES. 3. 8.

Unto me who am lesse then the least of all Saints, is this grace given, that I should Preach among the Gentiles, the Unsearchable Riches of Christ.

HERE are two other Observations that arise from these words, I shall (by Divine assistance) speak something to them, and so finish this Text. And the first is this. *Viz.*

That 'tis the great Duty of Preachers, to Preach Jesus Christ to the people.

DoBrins.

To me who am lesse then the least of all Saints is this Grace given that I should Preach among the Gentiles, the Unsearchable Riches of Christ.

'Tis the great duty of Ministers to Preach the Lord Christ to the people.

I shall prove it, and then open it to you.

In Acts 5. 42. And daily in the Temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach (what?) Jesus Christ. So in Acts 3. 20. And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was Preached unto you. So in 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. & 2 Cor. 4. 5. We preach not our selves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and our selves your servants for Jesus sake. So in Acts 4. 2. & 2. 35. & 9. 20. As soon as Paul was converted, straightway he Preached Christ in the Synagogue, that he was the Son of God.

P p 2

Now

Now for the opening of the Point, I shall only attempt two things.

1. Give you the reasons, *Why it is the great Duty of Ministers to preach Christ to the people.*
2. (Which will be the main) To shew you *How they are to preach Christ to the people.*

I confess this is a very useful Point in these dayes, where in many men Preach any thing, yea, every thing but a crucified Jesus. Well Christians, remember this, As 'tis your duty to take heed *How* you hear, so 'tis as much your duty to take heed *who* you hear. Many there are that count and call themselves the Ministers of Christ, and yet have neither skill, nor will to Preach Jesus Christ, to exalt and lift up Jesus Christ in lip or life, in word or work, a sad reckoning these will have to make up at last.

But to come to the Reasons of the Point, *Why it is the great work and duty of Ministers to preach Jesus Christ to the people.*

First, *Because that this is the only way to save, and to win souls to Jesus Christ.*

There is no other way of winning and saving souls, but by the Preaching of Christ to the people. In *Acts 4. 18, 11, 12.* compared, *Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.* You may Preach this, and that, and a thousand things to the people, and yet never better them, never win them; 'tis only Preaching of Christ, that allures and draws souls to Christ. *John 17. 3. This is life eternall, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Ah! nothing melts the hearts of sinners, nor wins upon the hearts of sinners, like the Preaching of the Lord Jesus. 'Tis true, the teaching of this, and that opinion, may please many a mansanfic, but 'tis only the Preaching of Christ that changes the heart, that conquers the heart, that turns the heart, &c. Peter by Preaching of a crucified Christ, converts three thousand souls at once. Were Christ more Preached, men would be more enamoured with him. He is only precious to them that hear of him, and that believe in him.

Jewel, Gower and others, had no such pleasure or joy, as they had in preaching Christ unto the people.

Acts 2. 14. to 42.

him. Christ is in all respects incomparable; and therefore as you would honour him, and win upon others, make him more and more known to the world, &c.

Secondly; They are to Preach Christ to the people, *Because it is the choicest and the chiefest way to ingratiate Christ with poor souls.*

This brings Christ and the soul together; and this keeps Christ and the soul together; nothing indeares Christ to the soul, like this. We see by woful experience, Christ neglected, despised, corned, & trampled upon by most, and no wonder, for many Preach themselves more then Christ, and they Preach men more then Christ, and their own notions and impressions, more then Christ. Surely Christ is but little beholding to such Ministers, and I think the souls of men as little, and Oh that they were so wise as to consider of it, and lay it to heart! Surely a real Christian cares not for any thing that hath not (*aliquid Christi*) something of Christ in it. There is a strange and strong Energy or forcebleness in hearing Christ and his beauties and excellencies displayed and discovered.

The daughters of Jerusalem by hearing the Church presenting Christ in so high a Character, and by describing and painting him out in such lively colours, are so enchanted and inflamed, that might they but know where to find him, they would be at any pains to seek him. When Christ is set forth in his glories, with much affection and admiration others fall in love with him, as you may see by comparing *Cam. 1. 10.* --- *ult.* with *Chap. 6. 1.*

Thirdly, 'Tis their great duty to Preach Jesus Christ to the people, *Because the Preaching up of Christ, is the only way to Preach down Antichrist, or what ever makes against Christ.*

Some would have Antichrist down, yea, they would have him down root and branch, but there's no such way for his totall and finall overthrow, as the Preaching of Christ; for the more the glory, fullness, perfection, and excellency of Christ is discovered, the more the horrid vileness, and matchlesse wickedness of the man of sin will be discovered and

Marian Arch-
bishop of Con-
stantinople,
said once of
Sabbath; a
wretched and
unworthy
man, whom
he had Ordai-
ned to be a
Presbyter, and
with we had
rather laid
our hands on
the byrant,
then on such
heads.

In the Canon
Law the Pope
is said to be
*Solutus omni
lege humana.*

Analofei.

Belarmine con-
fesseth to his
great grief,
That ever
since the *Lu-
therans* have
declared the
Pope to be
Antichrist,
his Kingdome
hath not only
not increased,
but every day
more & more
decreased and
decayed. *Lib.
3. de papa Rō.
cap. 31.*

The Germans
have this Pro-
verb (say
they) The
pavement of
Hell is made of
the bare skulls
of Priests

and abhorred, &c. 2 *Theff.* 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10. And then
shall that wicked one be revealed. The Greek word (*Anomos*)
properly signifies a lawlesse, yokeles, masterles Monster,
one that holdeth himselfe subject to no Law.

Pope *Nicholas* the first, said, That he was above Law, (be-
cause *Constantine* stiled the Pope God) And of the same
opinion were most of the Popes.

Whom he shall consume. The Greek word signifies to con-
sume by little and little, till a thing come to nothing.

With the spirit of his mouth. That is, with the evidence and
glory of his word, in the mouths of his Messengers. The
Ministers of the word are as a Mouth whereby the Lord
breatheth out that glorious, mighty, and everlasting Go-
spel, which shall by degrees bruise Antichrist, and all his
adherents, and break them in sunder like a rod of Iron, &c.

When Christ was born, all the Idols that were set up in
the world (as Historians write) fell down. When Jesus
Christ comes to be lifted up in a Nation, in a City, in a
Town, in a Family, yea, in any heart, then all Idols with-
out and within, will fall before the power, presence, & glory
of Jesus. Since *Luther* began to lift up Christ in the Gospel,
what a deal of ground ha's Antichrist lost? and he does and
will loose more and more, as Christ comes to be more and
more manifested and lifted up in the Chariot of his word.
Many in these dayes that speak much against Antichrist,
have much of Antichrist within them. And certainly, there
is no such way to cast him out of mens hearts, and out of
the world, as the Preaching & making known of Christ, as
the exalting or lifting up of Christ in the Gospel of grace.

A fourth Reason why they are to Preach Christ to the
people, is this, *Because else they contract upon themselves the blood
of souls.*

There's no other way for them to avoid the contrasting
of the blood of men and women souls upon them, but the
Preaching of Christ unto them. Now a man were better to
have all the blood of the world upon him, then the blood
of one soul. The blood of souls, of all blood, cries loudest,
and wounds deepest: The lowest, the darkest, and the hot-
test

rest place in Hell will be the sad & dreadful portion of such upon whose skirts the blood of souls shall be found at last. Hence that passage of *Paul*, in *1 Cor. 9. 16.* *Was unto me if I Preach not the Gospel.* The Motto that should be writ upon Preachers study doors, and on their walls, and on all the Books they look on, on the beds they lye on, and on the seats they sit on, &c. should be this, *The Blood of soules, The Blood of souls.* The soul is the better, the Noble part of man, it bears most of the Image of God, 'tis capable of union & communion with God. Christ I wear for it, and bled for it, and therefore we to those Merchants that make merchandise of the souls of men. This was a comfort and an honour to *Paul*, that he kept himself from the blood of souls, *Acts 20. 25, 26, 27.* He appeals to them that they were witnesses that *he was free from the blood of all men.* *Paul* had held out Jesus Christ in his Natures, in his Names, in his Offices, and in all his excellencies and perfections, and so frees himself from the blood of all men. And Ministers can no way secure themselves from the blood of souls, but by Preaching up, and living out a crucified Jesus.

The last reason is this, *Because the Preaching of Christ contributes most to their comfort here, and to their reward hereafter; therefore they are to Preach the Lord Christ to the people.*

When *Luther* was upon a dying bed, this was no small joy and comfort to his spirit, *Thee O Lord (saith he) have I known, thee have I loved, thee have I taught, thee have I trusted, and now into thy hand I commend my spirit.* There can be no greater joy to a Minister then by Preaching Christ to win souls to Christ. *1 Thess. 2. 19, 20.* *For what is our hope, or joy, or Crown of rejoicing, are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, at his coming, ye are our glory and joy.* They that by Preaching Christ, win souls to Christ, shall shine as the Stars in the Firmament, *Dan. 12. 3.* Every soul won to Christ, is a glorious Pearl added to a Preachers Crown. *1 Pet. 5. 4.* *And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a Crown of glory.* A Crown imports perpetuity plenty and dignity, the height of humane ambition.

and the glorious Crests of gallants. Their meaning is, that the more eminent any one is in Church or State, & doth not employ his eminency accordingly, the more low shall they lye in Hell. *Rev. 18. 11, 12, 13, 14.*

Bernard comfortably observes, That Ministers have their reward, *Secundum laborem*, not *Secundum proventum*.

It is the opinion of some; That there are three places of exaltation in heaven.

The first, and highest, is for converting Ministers.

The second, is for suffering Martyrs.

The third is for persevering Christians.

Without doubt, those Ministers shall be high in heaven, who make it their heaven to hold forth Christ, and to win souls to Christ; who are willing to be any thing, to be nothing, that Christ may be all in all to poor souls. And thus I have given you the Reasons of the Point.

I shall now come to the second thing (which is the main) and that is, to shew you

How Ministers are to Preach Christ to the people.

Many weak and flight spirits in these dayes, think that 'tis as easie to Preach, as to play, and so they hop from one thing to another, and those that are not qualified, nor fit for the least and lowest employment, yet judge themselves fit enough for the greatest and the weightiest employment in the world; and that which would certainly break the backs, not only of the best and strongest men, but even of the very Angels, should not God put under his everlasting arms. No labour to that of the mind, no travel to that of the soul, and those that are faithfull in the Lords Vineyard, find it so. *Luther* was wont to say, That if he were again to choose his calling, he would dig, or do any thing, rather then take upon him the Office of a Minister. And many other eminent lights have been of the same opinion with him.

But what are those Rules that every Preacher is to observe in his Preaching of Christ to the people?

I Answer, These Eleven.

First, *Jesus Christ* must be Preached plainly, perspicuously, so as the meanest capacity may understand what they say

2 Cor. 2. 16.

Who is sufficient for these things?

Almost every Upstart in these dayes thinks himself sufficient.

Who am I? says *Moses*, who am I not, faith every green head in these dayes.

How Christ must be Preached, shewed in a 11 things.

say concerning Christ; they must Preach Christ for edification, and not to work admiration, as too many do in these dayes. *Paul* was excellent at this kind of Preaching, 1 Cor. 14. 18, 19. he had rather speak five words to edification, then ten thousand words to work admiration in ignorant people. So in 1 Cor. 2. 4, 5. *And my speech, and my preaching was not with enticing words of mans wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power. That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* As if he should say, Such Preach with little power; who come with the excellency of speech, or with the enticing words of mans wisdom. Ah! many there are (I speak it with grief, and to their shame) that delight to soar aloft in obscure discourses, and to expresse themselves in new-minted words and phrases, and to shew high strains, and flashes of wit, and all to work admiration in the ignorant. Such kind of Preachers are as clouds, & painted glass-windows, that hinder the light from shining in upon souls, that hinder the Sun of righteousness from breaking forth in his beauty and glory upon the spirits of poor Creatures. Wo unto these men in the day when such souls shall plead against them, when they shall say, Lord here are the persons whose Office and work was to make dark things plain, and they have made plain things dark and obscure, that we might rather wonder at them, then any wayes profit by them. *Aarons* Bels were of pure gold; our whole Preaching must be Scripture-proof, or we and our works must burn together. The profoundest Prophets accommodated themselves to their hearers capacities. Holy *Moses* covers his glittering face with a Vail, when he was to speak to the people. Yea, 'tis very observable, that the Evangelists spake vulgarly many times for their hearers sake, even to manifest incongruity, as you may see in *John* 17. 2. *Rev.* 1. 4. But, above all, it is most observable concerning God the Father, who is the great Master of speech, when he spake from Heaven, he makes use of three several Texts of Scripture, in one breath, *Mat.* 17. 5. *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear him. This is my beloved Son, that Scripture you have in Ps.* 2. 7. *In whom*

Preaching is not a matter of parts, words or wit, 'tis Scripture demonstration that works upon the conscience, and that God owns and crowns.

It was a saying of *Luther*, From a vain-glorious Doctor, from a contentious Pastor, and from unprofitable Questions, good Lord deliver his Church.

Si vis fieri bonum concionatur

*da operam ut sis
bonus Biblicus.*
If you will be
a good Prea-
cher, study to
be well ac-
quainted with
the Scripture,
said one in
the Monastery.

I am well pleased, this you have in Isa. 42. 1. Hear him, this you have in Dent. 18. 15. All which may bespeak them to blush, who through curious wisenesse disdain at the stately plainness of the Scripture; Oh how unlike to God are such Preachers that think to correct the Divine Wisdom and Eloquence, with their own infancy, vanity, novelty, and sophistry. Yea Jesus Christ himself, the great Doctor of the Church, teaches this lesson, *Mark 4. 33. And with many such Parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to bear it.* Not as he was able to have spoken; he could have exprest himself at a higher rate then all mortals can; he could have been in the Clouds; he knew how to knit such knots that they could never untie, but he would not; he delights to speak to his hearers shallow capacities. So in *John 16. 12. I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now.* He that speaks not to the hearers capacities, is as a Barbarian to them, and they to him.

He is the best Preacher (saith Luther) that Preaches vulgarly, that Preaches most plainly. He is not the best Preacher that tickles the ear, or that works upon the fancy, &c. but he that breaks the heart, and awakens the conscience. 'Tis sad to consider how many Preachers in these dayes are like *Heracitus*, who was called *The dark Doctor*, because he affected dark speeches. Oh! how do many in these dayes affect sublime notions, uncouth phrases, making plain truths difficult, and easie truths hard? *They darken counsel by words without knowledge, Job 38. 2.* But how unlike to Christ, the Prophets, and Apostles, these dark Doctors are, I will leave you to judge; nor would I have their accounts to make up for all the world; I will leave them to stand or fall to their own Master. God loves, owns, and crowns plain Preaching, though some account it foolishnesse, yet to them that are saved, *is the power of God, and the wisdom of God, 1 Cor. 1. 20. - 30.* I have stayed the longer upon this first Direction, because of its great usefullnesse in these deluding dayes.

Secondly, As they must Preach Christ plainly, so they must Preach Christ Faithfully. Ministers are *Stewards, 1 Cor.*

Prov. 13. 17.
Chap. 25. 13.
Job 33. 23.

4. and you know it is the duty of a Steward to be faithful in his Stewardship, to give to every man the portion that is due to him, cheering up those hearts that God would have cheered, and weakning those wicked hands that God would have weakned, and strengthening those feeble knees that God would have strengthened. Ministers are Ambassadors, and you know it is the great concernment of Ambassadors to be very faithful in their Masters messages; God looks more, and is affected and taken more with a Ministers faithfulness, then with any thing else. A great voyce, an affected tone, studied notions, and silken expressions, may affect and take poor weak souls; but 'tis only the faithfulness of a Minister in his Ministerial work, that takes God, that wins upon God, *Mat. 23. 21, 23. Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of the Lord.* A Joy too big to enter into thee, and therefore thou must enter into it. This was Paul's glory, *Acts 20. 27.* that he had not shunned to declare unto them the whole counsell of God; neither fear nor favour swayed him one way or another, but he was faithful in his Masters work; and usually God crowns him and his labours most, and sends most Fish into his Net that is most faithful, though he be less skilfull, that hath more of the heart in the work, though he hath lesse of the brain.

The Maid in *Plutarch*, being to be sould in the market, when a Chapman asked her, *Wilt thou be faithful if I buy thee?* I, said she, (*Etiams non emeris*) that I will though you doe not buy me. So Ministers must be faithfull, though God should not buy them, though he should not thus and thus encourage them in their work. Their very feet are beautiful, who are faithful, and their message most comfortable to those that sigh and moun, that labour and languish under the sense of sin, and fear of wrath.

Thirdly, They must preach Christ Humbly, as well as faithfully, *2 Cor. 4. 5. We Preach not our selves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and our selves your servants for Jesus sake.* Paul doth not complement as the men of the World do, *Your Servant Sir*, but he spake as it was, for there are no greater Servants,

The Office of a Minister, is the highest Office, and if his Office be highest, his faithfulness must be answerable, or he will be doubly miserable.

Isa. 52. 7.

Gregory Nazianzen that famous Preacher, setteth no other price upon all his Athenian Learning

(wherein he excel'd) then this, That he had something of worth to esteem, as nothing in comparison of Christ.

then those that are Servants to the souls of men, for Jesus sake. So *John* was very humble in the exercise of his Ministry, *John* 3. 30, 31. *He must increase, but I must decrease, &c.*

Luther used to say, *That a Minister must take heed of bringing three Dogs into the Pulpit, viz. Pride, Covetousnesse, and Envy.* The friends of the Bridegroom must not woe and sue for themselves but for the Bridegroom. Dispencers of the Gospel are the Bridegrooms friends, and they must not speak one word for the Bridegroom, and two for themselves, as hath been the trade of many, weak and worthlesse men. 'Tis the greatest glory of a Minister in this world, to be high in spiritual work, and humble in heart. Vain-glory is a pleasant Thief, 'tis the sweet spoyler of spiritual excellencies. *Paul* was very humble in the exercise of his Ministry, none so high in worth as he, nor none so low nor humble in heart, as he; though he was the greatest among the Apostles, yet he accounts himself *lesse then the least of all Saints*; yea, he counted it not onely his duty, but his glory, to be a servant to the weakest Saints, *To the weak I became as weak; who is weake, and I am not weake? who is offended, and I burn not?*

Fourthly, As they are to Preach the Lord Jesus Christ humbly, so they are to Preach him *Wisely*. In *Prov.* 11. 30. *He that winneth souls, is wise*; and indeed the greatest wisdom in the world is requisite to the winning of souls to Christ. *He that wins souls*, or he that catcheth souls, as the Fowler doth Birds (as the Hebrew word imports) or Fishermen Fishes, *he is wise*. There is a holy and a heavenly craft required in the winning of souls to Christ, *2 Cor.* 12. 16. *Nevertheless being crafty (saith the Apostle) I caught you with guile.* He speaks of a holy and heavenly craft.

It is written of the Fox, that when he is very hungry after prey, and can find none, that he lyes down, and feigneth himself dead, and so the Fowls light upon him, and then he catcheth them. *Paul* hungering after the welfare of the *Corinthians* souls, makes use of his heavenly craft to catch them. There's a great deal of wisdom required to hold out Christ unto the people, not only as a good, but as the greatest

1 COR. 9. 22.
2 COR. II. 20.

Veloeach taketh from *Lagch*, to take.

If one soul is more worth then a world, as he hath told us, who only went to the price of it, *Mat.* 16. 26. then they must needs be

greatest good, as the choicest good, as the chiefest good, as the most sure good, as an immutable good, as an independent good, as a total good, and as an eternal good. Christ must thus be held forth to draw souls to fall in love with him, and to work their hearts to run out after him. There's wisdom required to answer all cavils and objections that keep Christ and poor souls asunder. There's wisdom required to take souls off from all false bottomes, that they are apt to build upon. There's wisdom required to present Christ freely to souls, in opposition to all unrighteousness, and to all unworthiness in man. There's wisdom required to suit things to the capacities and conditions of poor souls; to make dark things plain, & hard things easie. Ministers must not be like him in the Emblem, That gave straw to the Dog, and a bone to the Asse, but they must sue all their discourses to the conditions and capacities of poor creatures, or else all will be lost, time lost, pains lost, God lost, Heaven lost, and souls lost for ever.

Fifthly, They must preach Christ, *Zealously, boldly*, as well as wisely, *Acts 4. 20.* When they had charged them that they should Preach no more in the name of Christ, why? say they, what doe you tell us of the whip, or of Prisons, or of this and that. *We cannot but speak the things that we have seen and heard.* So in *Jer. 20. 9.* *Thy word was in my heart as a burning fire, shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.* *Isa. 58. 1.* *Cry aloud; spare not, lift up thy voice like a Trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Israel their sins.* And *Isaiah* had his tongue touched with a coal of fire from the Altar, *Chap. 6. 6, 7.* And when the Disciples were to go and Preach the Gospel, the fire sate upon their tongues, *Acts 2. 34.* The worst of men are in a dead sleep, and the best of men are too often in a sinful slumber, as the Spouse in *Cant. 5. 2.* and the wise Virgins in *Mat. 25.* and therefore faithful Ministers had need cry aloud, they had need to be courageous and zealous, to awaken both sinners and Saints that none may go sleeping to Hell. Every Coward is a Murderer, as the Philosopher well observed. The cowardice of the Mini-

wife who
win souls to
Christ.

As *Crasus* his
dumb Son did
for his father.

*Bast, Luther,
Latimer, Des
ring,* and mul-
titudes of
others have
been very
zealous and
courageous in
their Mini-
stry, &c.

Mini-

They that write the story of the travels of the Apostles, report that Simon Zelotes Preached here in England. If ever there needed some Zelots, it is now, such as Epiphanius speaks of Elisha, That he sucked fire out of his mothers breast.

The father payes the nurse, though the child dies. The Doctor ha's his Fee, though the patient dyes. And the Vine dresser ha's his reward though the Vine wither, So will God deal with faithfull Ministers.
1 Cor. 2. 15.
1 Tim. 4. 2, 3, 4

Minister, is cruelty: if he fear the faces of men, he is a murderer of the souls of men. Ministers must say as Hector in Homer, *I will combat with him, though his hands were as fire, and his strength as iron.* Let mens hands be as fire, and their strength as iron, yet Ministers must deal with them, and strive to make a conquest on them, Ezek. 2. 3. --- ult.

Luther professed, That he had rather be accounted any thing, then be accused of wicked silence in Christs cause. *Let me be accounted (sayes he) proud, let me be accounted covetous, let me be accounted a murderer, yea, guilty of all Vices, so I be not proved guilty of wicked silence in the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Themistocles being about to speak to the General of the Greeks Army, against Exerxes, he held up his staffe, as if he had been about to strike him, Strike (said Themistocles) but yet hear. So should Ministers say, strike, but yet hear; rail, but yet hear; despise, but yet hear; censure, but yet hear; oppose, but yet hear; do what you will, but yet hear. *Non amat, qui non zelat, saith Augustine, He is no friend to God, that is not zealous for him.*

When one desired to know what kind of man Basil was, there was (saith the History) presented to him in a dream, a pillar of fire, with this Motto, *Talis est Basilus, Basil is such a one, all on a light fire for God.* So every Minister should be all on a fire for God.

Sixthly, They are to Preach Christ laboriously, painfully, frequently; a Minister must be like the Bee, that is still a flying from one Flower to another, to suck out Honey for the good of others. Should not that dreadful word make every idle Shepheard tremble, Jer. 48. 10. *Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord negligently.* 1 Cor. 15. ult. *Be ye steadfast and unmoveable, allwayes abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* Oh! the dreadful woes that are pronounc't in Scripture against idle Shepheards, Jer. 23. 1. Ezek. 34. 3. Chap. 34. 2. Zech. 11. 17. Mat. 23. 13, 14, 15, 16, 23, 25, 27. The great Shepheard of our souls, the Lord Jesus, was still a feeding of his flock, and much in provoking others to the same work. John 21.

Feed

Feed my Lambs, feed my sheep. 2 Tim. 4. Preach the word in season, and out of season. Christ wept for souls, and bled for souls, and prayed for souls; and shall not Ministers sweat much for souls, and work much for the good of souls? Doubtless they will give but a sad account to Christ, that make any thing serve to fill up the hour; that spend two or three hours at the end of a week to fit themselves for Sabbath-Exercises. Idleness is hateful in any, but most abominable & intollerable in Ministers, and sooner or later none shall pay so dear for it, as such, witness the frequent woes that are denounced in Scripture against them. Where should a Souldier dye but in the field? And where should a Minister dye, but in the Pulpit?

Pompey, in a great dearth at Rome, having provided store of provisions for his Citizens that were ready to perish, and being ready to put to sea, he commanded the Pilot to hoise sail, and be gone; The Pilot told him, That the Sea was tempestuous, and that the voyage was like to be dangerous, *It matters not* (said Pompey) *hoise up saile, 'tis not necessary that we should live, 'tis necessary that they should be preserved from ruine and famine.* So should Ministers say, 'tis not necessary that we should live, but 'tis necessary that poor souls should live and be happy for ever, 'tis necessary that they should be acquainted with the things of their peace, 'tis necessary that they should be delivered from the power of Satan, and from wrath to come, and therefore 'tis necessary that we should be frequent and abundant in the work of the Lord, and not plead storms or tempests, or that a Lyon is in the way.

It was Vespasian the Emperours speech (and may well be applied to Ministers) *Opparet imperator cum flantem mori, An Emperour ought to dye standing.*

Seventhly, As they are to Preach Christ painfully, so they are to Preach Christ Exemplarily. 1 Pet. 5. 3. *Be thou an example to the flock.* They must Preach Christ as well in life, as in doctine. Ministers must not be like the Drugges, that Physicians say are hot in the mouth, and cold in operation; hot in the Pulpit, and cold and careless in their lives and conver-

If a Minister had as many eyes as Argus to watch, and as many hands as Briareus to labour, he might find employment enough for them all.

The Angels on Jacobs ladder, were some ascending, others descending, none standing or sitting still. Ministers must be like them.

Sutton.

A Preacher (as Quinilian saith of an Orator) should be *Vir bonus, discretus, paterfamilias*, A well spoken and well deced person.

John the Abbot professeth, That he had never taught others any thing, which he had not first practised himself.

*Tace lingua,
loquere vita.*

1 Sam. 2. 17.

The souls of Priests (I may say, of Ministers) must be purer then the Sunne beams, saith Chrysostome. Iuel, Bucer, and Bradford, were famous examples for holiness.

conversations. They must say, as Gideon said to his Souldiers, *Judg. 17. 17. Look on me and do likewise. Mat. 5. 16. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorifye your father which is in Heaven.* They are called *Angels*, and they are called *Starres*, because they should shine in righteousness and holiness.

What *Cæsar* once said of his wife, *That it was not enough for her to be without fault, but she should be without all suspicion of fault*, may well be applyed to Ministers, who of all men in the world should be most free from the very appearances of evil. The lives of Ministers oftentimes do convince more strongly, then their words; their tongues may perswade, but their lives command.

Talk not of a good life (said the Heathen) but let thy life speak. God appointed that both the weights and measures of the Sanctuary, should be twice as large as those of the Common-wealth, to shew, that he expects much more of those that wait upon him in the Sanctuary, then he doth of others. Ministers should be like musk among linnen, which casts a fragrant smell: or like that box of *Spikenard*, which being broken open, filled the house with its odour.

Gregory saith of *Athenasius*, That his life was a continuall Sermon, and wooing men to Christ. *Aristotle* requires this in an Orator, *That he be a good man.* How much more then should Gods Orators be good and gracious? When *Elie's* Sons were wicked, the people abhorred the Offering of the Lord; and what is that that renders the things of God so contemptuous and odious in the eyes of many people in this Nation, but the ignorance, looseness, prophaneſs, and baseness of those that are the dispensers of them. Unholy Ministers pull down, instead of building up; Oh the souls that their lives destroy! These by their loose lives, lead their flocks to hell, where their selves must lye lowermost.

A Painter being blamed by a Cardinal for putting too much red upon the viſages of *Peter* and *Paul*, tartly replied, that he painted them so, as blushing at the lives of those men who ſiled themselves their Successors. Ah! how do the lewd and wicked lives of many that are called and accounted Ministers, make others to blush?

Salvian

Salvian relates, how the Heathen did reproach some Christians, who by their ungodly lives, made the Gospel of Christ to be a reproach, *Where (said they) is that good Law which they do believe? Where are those rules of godliness which they do learn? They read the holy Gospel, and yet are wicked, they hear the Apostles writings, and yet are drunk, they follow Christ, and yet disobey Christ, they profess a holy Law, and yet do lead impure lives.* As this is very applicable to many Professors in these dayes, so 'tis applicable to many Preachers also.

Salvianus de
G. D. l. 4.

I have read of a scandalous Minister, that was struck at the heart, and converted in reading those words, *Rom. 2. 21. Thou which teachest another, teachest thou not thy self? If this Treatise should fall into any such hand, Oh that it might have the same operation! Wicked Ministers do more hurt by their lives, then they do good by their doctrine.*

I have read of a Gentlewoman, that turned Atheist, because she lived under a great learned Doctor, that preached excellently, but lived very licentious.

The Heathen brings in a young man, who hearing of the adulteries and wickednesses of the gods, said, *What do they say, and shall I stick at it? So say, most, when their teachers and leaders are dewd and wicked, what do they such and such abominations, and shall we stick at it?*

When one dehoist in life among the *Lacedemonians*, stepped up, and gave good counsel, they would not receive it; but when another of a better life stepped up and gave the same counsel, they presently followed it. The application is easie. Every Ministers life should be a Commentary upon Christs life, nothing wins and builds like this.

Eighthly, Ministers must Preach *Freely, experimentally*, as well as *exemplarily*; they must speak from the heart, to the heart; they must feel the worth, the weight, the sweet of those things upon their own souls, that they give out to others. *John 1. 2. 3. That which was from the beginning which ye have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life: (For the life was manifested, and men have seen it, and have with-*

Chrysostome
Preached so
feelingly, and
so affectionat-
ly, that his
hearers
thought they
had as good
be without
the Sun in the
Firmament, as
Chrysostome in
the Pulpit.

rest, and then unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.) That which ye have seen and heard, declare ye unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. The highest Mystery in the Divine Rhetorick, is to feel what a man speaks, and then speak what a man feels.

Praxiteles exquisitely drew love taking the pattern from that passion which he felt in his own heart.

'Twas said of *Luther*, That he spake as if he had been within a man. Ministers must so Preach to the people, as if they lived in the very hearts of the people; as if they had been told all their wants, and all their wayes, all their sins, and all their doubts; no Preaching to this, no Preachers to these.

Ministers should not be like *Cæsar's* Souldier, That digg'd a Fountain for *Cæsar*, and himself perished for want of water. Yet many such there be in these dayes, that dig and draw water out of the Wels of Salvation for others, and yet themselves eternally perish, by their non-drinking of the waters of life. If they are Monsters (and not to be named among men) that feed and feast their servants, but starve their wives; then what monsters are they that feed and feast other mens souls, with the dainties & delicates of Heaven, but starve their own? No misery, no Hell to this.

Ninthly, As Ministers must preach the word feelingly, experimentally, so they must preach the word Rightly; they must divide and distribute the word according to every ones spiritual estate and condition; they must give comfort to whom comfort belongs, and counsel to whom counsel belongs, and reproof to whom reproof belongs, and terror to whom terror belongs. *2 Tim. 2. 15.* Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Or word for word; Rightly cutting into parts the word of truth. Some say the Metaphor is taken from the Priests of the Old Testament, who having slain the Beasts that were to be sacrificed, did joyn't and divide the same in an accurate manner. Others say, 'tis a Metaphor

Isa. 40. 1, 2.
Isa. 50. 4.
2 Cor. 5. 10.
H. M.

Gerhard,
Parkins, &c.

Metaphor taken from a Cutter of Leather, who cutteth off that which is superfluous, when he cutteth out Rains and Thongs: So in the handling of the word, Questions that are superfluous and unprofitable, ought to be cut off, and that only is to be held forth, that makes for the hearers instruction, edification, and consolation. Others say the Metaphor is taken from the cutting and squaring out of the Streets, and High-ways, and setting out the bounds of mens Lands and Possessions. Others by cutting the word of truth aright, understand the raising of right Instructions, by following the rule of the word, only as a Plow-man that draweth or cutteth a right furrow in the ground.

To divide the word aright, is to cut out (saith *Calvin*, & others) every one his portion, as a Parent cutteth out bread to his Children, or a Cook meat to his Guests. A general Doctrine, not applyed, is as a sword without an edge, not in it self, but to the people, who by reason of their own singular senselessness and weakness, are not able to apply it to their own estates and conditions. Or as a whole loaf set before Children, that will do them no good. A Garment fitted for all bodies, is fit for no body; and that which is spoken to all, is taken as spoken to none. Doctrine is but the drawing of the bow, Application is the hitting of the mark. How many are wise in generals, but vain in their practical inferences! such Preachers are fitter for *Rome*, then *England*, souls may go sleeping and dreaming to Hell before such Preaching, ere such Preachers will awaken them, and shew them their danger. O that therefore the people were so wise as that when sin is reproved, judgments threatened, mercies promised, and Christ freely and fully offered, they would apply all to their own souls! This is the misery of many in our dayes, they come to Sermons as beggars come to Banquets, carrying nothing but the scraps away with them.

Tenthly, They must Preach the word *Acceptably*, as well as rightly, *Eccles. 12. 10.* The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words (or words of delight, as the Hebrew ha's it) and that which was written, was upright, even words of truth. Ministers words should be divinely delectable, and desirable,

R r 2

Chrysost.
Bulinger,
Theol. libi, &c.

And if *Galen* could say,
That in anatomizing a mans Brain,
Physicians must carry themselves as men do in the Temple; how much more must Ministers do so in dividing the word of life.

Birkesh ni Pibil, from *Barkesh*, signifies an earnest vehement seeking, &c.

'Twas a fine commendation given by *Quintillian*, of *Thucydides*, *Thucydides* writes thick and quick, close & clear, he is solid and succint, sententious, and judicious.

Acts 18. 24.

2 Cor. 12. 16.

Lib. 5. cap. 1.

Basil & Bucer were curt & concise, full and clear in their discourses.

1 Cor. 7. 10. 24.

Acts 6. 1.

The Shew-bread stood all the week before the Lord, so shew

they should Divinely please, & Divinely profit, they should Divinely tickle, & Divinely take both ear and heart. A Minister should be a weighty speaker, he should cloath his Doctrine in such a comely, lovely drest, as that he may by it slide insensibly into his hearers hearts; Ministers should cloath their matter with decent words: The leaves give some beauty to the Tree. Good matter in an uncomely language is like a bright Taper in a sturish Candlestick, or like a fair body in unhandsome cloaths, or like a gold-ring on a Leprous hand. *Truth* (saith one) *loves to be plain, but not sturish*; as she loves not to be clad in gay colours, like a wanton strumper, so not in lowly rags like a nasty Creature. *Aarons* bells were golden bells (*dulce sonantes*) sounding pleasantly, and not as sounding brass, or ringing Cymbals. Holy eloquence is a gift of the Holy Ghost, and may (doubtless) as well as other gifts of the Spirit, be made prudently useful to the setting forth of Divine truth, and the catching of souls by craft, as the Apostle speaks; surely where it is, it may be made use of as an *Egyptian* Jewel to adorn the Tabernacle.

Lactantius hath wel observed, That Philosophers, Orators and Poets, were therefore very pernicious, in that they easily insnared incautious minds with sweetness of speech. Therefore his advice is, even in delivering the truth of Christ, to sweeten the speech for the winning of them to Christ, who will neither hear, nor read, nor value, nor regard the truth, except it be polished and trimmed up in a lovely drest.

In the last place (and so to adde no more) as they must preach the word acceptably, so they must preach the word *Constantly*; they must not lay down the Bible, to take up the sword (as some have done for worldly advantages) they must not leave the word to serve Tables as others have done upon the same account; they must not change their black Cloaks, for scarlet Cloaks; they must abide and continue in their places and employments; they must neither change their work, nor their Master; *Acts 6. 4. But we will give our selves continually to pray, and to the Ministry of the word.*

They

They would not assigne their charge to some Surrogates, or deputies, that themselves might live at ease: No, they were peremptorily resolv'd to hold on, to continue in these two choice duties, Prayer, and Ministry of the word. So in Chap. 26. 22. *Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things then those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come,* 1 Tim. 4. 15; 16. *Meditate upon these things, give thy self wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all, or in all things. Take heed unto thy selfe, and unto thy doctrine: Continue in them, for in doing this, thou shalt both save thy self, and them that hear thee.* 2 Tim. 3. 14. *But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.* Eccles. 12. 9. And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge, yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many Proverbs.

Hosea was four-score years a Prophet in Israel, and yet did not convert them, yet notwithstanding all discouragements, he continued constant, and that with abundance of freshness and liveliness.

Chrysostome compares good Pastors to Fountains, that ever send forth waters, or Conduits, that are alwayes running, though no Pail be put under.

Erasmus saith of *Hierom* (*Minima pars nōtēis dābatur somno, minor cibi, nulla otio*) He allowed least time for sleep, little for food, none for idleness. It best becomes a Minister to dye Preaching in a Pulpit.

Now if this be so, Then by way of use let me say, That this truth looks very sorely and wisely upon all these that Preach any thing rather then Christ.

The Lord be merciful to them, how have they forgotten the great work about which their heads & hearts should be most exercised, to wit, the bringing in of souls to Christ, & the building up of souls in Christ; where do we find in all the Scripture, that Christ, his Prophets, or Apostles, did ever in their preaching meddle with businesses of state, or things of a meer civil concernment? *My Kingdome is not of this world.*

that Preaching is not out of season on any day.

in tūm; idē.
Spend thy time in them.

* *Abide.* *Abide.*
Abide, keep thy station, thou wilt be put to it, thou wilt meet with earth- quakes.

Chrysost. in
Mat. Hom. 15.

world, *What he's made me a Judge?* sayes Christ. I hope it will not be counted presumption in me, if I shall propound a few Rules for such to observe, that are willing to Preach Christ to poor souls; I will only propound three.

And the first is this, *If you would Preach Christ to the people, according to the Rules last mentioned, then*

You must get a Christ within you.

There's nothing that makes a man indeed so able to Preach Christ to the people, as the getting a Christ within him: And 'tis very observable, that the great Rabbies and Doctors that want a Christ within, they do but bungle in the work of the Lord, in the Preaching of a crucified Jesus; and were it not for the help of *Austine, Chrysostome, Ambrose, &c. Tertullian, &c.* what sad, dead, and pitiful work would they make? Yea, for want of a Christ within, how little of Christ do they understand? How little of Christ do they make known, notwithstanding all their borrowed helps?

Paul was a man that had got a Christ within him, Gal. 2. 20. I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me, and the life that I live is by the faith of the Son of God, &c. Compare this with *Gal. 4. 19. My little children, of whom I travel in birth till Christ be formed in you.* A Christ within, makes him travel in birth. The

Greek word Translated, *I travel in birth*, signifies not only the travel of the woman at the birth of the Child, but also the painful bearing thereof before the birth. The pains of travel breed not a greater desire to see a man-child born in to the world, then *Paul's* love bred in him, till Christ were anew formed in them. No man did so much for the winning of souls to Christ, as *Paul*, nor no man had so much of a Christ within him, as *Paul*. Nothing will naturalize a Ministers heart to his work, like a Christ within; nothing will make him so wise, so painful, so watchful, so careful to win souls, as a Christ within; nothing will make him hold out, and hold on in the work of the Lord, in the face of all oppositions, persecutions, dangers and deaths, as a Christ within. Nothing will make a man strive with sinners, and weep over sinners, and wait upon sinners for their return, as a Christ within. Such Ministers as have not a Christ within them,

Odina.

a Cor. 11. 23. ult.

As Nurses to Princes children, are fed with the most delicate fare, but not for their own sakes, but for the childrens sake to whom they give

Nurse. So 'tis with many Ministers that want a Christ within.

2 Tim. 2. 24.

&c.

will find no comfort, and as little successe in their Preaching of Christ. Above all gettings, get a Christ within, or else after all thy Preaching, thy felt will be a cast-away.

Secondly, They that would Preach Christ to the people, must

Study more Scripture truths, Scripture Mysteries, then humane Histories.

They must study Gods Book more then all other Books. The truth and antiquity of the Book of God finds no companion, either in Age or Autherity. No Histories are comparable to the Histories of the Scriptures,

- For {
- 1 Antiquity.
 - 2 Rarity.
 - 3 Variety.
 - 4 Brevity.
 - 5 Perspicuity.
 - 6 Harmony.
 - 7 Kerity.

Gregory calls the Scripture (*Cor. & animam Dei*) The heart and soule of God, for in the Scriptures, as in a glasse, we may see how the heart and soule of God stands towards his poor creatures. It was the glory of *Apollis*, that he was mighty in the Scripture, *Acts 18. 24. John 5. 39. Search the Scriptures*, saith Christ. The Greek word signifies to search as men search for gold in Mines. You must search the Scripture, not superficially, but narrowly. The Scriptures are a great depth, wherein the choyceest treasures are hid, therefore you must dig deep, if you will find, *Col. 3. 16. Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you.* Or as the Greek hath it, *Let the word of Christ indwell in you, as an ingrafted word, incorporated into your soule.* Let the word be so concocted & digested by you, as that you turn it into a part of your selves. You must be familiarly acquainted with the word, you must not let it passe by you as a Stranger, or lodge and sojourn with you as a Wayfaring man; it must continually abide with you, and dwell richly in you. *2 Tim. 3. 16, 17.*

Moses found more ancient then all those whom the *Grecians* make most ancient, as *Homer*, *Hesiod*, and *Jupiter* himself, whom the *Greeks* have seated in the top of their Divinity.

1 Pet. 2. 2.

1 Pet. 2. 2.

All

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. All Books and helps are not comparable to the Bible, for the compleating and perfecting of a man for the work of the Ministry.

That which a Papist reports of their Sacrament of the Masse, That there are as many mysteries in it, as there are drops in the Sea, dust on the earth, Angels in heaven, Stars in the sky, Atoms in the Sun-beams, or sands on the sea-shore, &c. may be truly asserted of the word of God. No study to the study of the Scripture for profit and comfort. Count *Abah*, that Princely Preacher, was wont to say, *That the whole Scriptures were the swadling bands of the child Jesus*, he being to be found almost in every page, in every verse, in every line.

Luther would often say, Thus he had rather that all his Books should be burnt, than that they should be a means to hinder persons from studying of the Scripture.

The third and last Rule I shall lay down, is this, Such as would Preach Christ aright to the people, had need *Dwell much upon the vanity of Humane doctrines.*

The vanity of which doctrines may be thus discovered. First, They do not discover sin in its ugliness and filthiness, as the Scriptures do. They search but to the skin, they reach not to the heart, they do not do as the Master did in *Jonah's* ship, when they were in a storm.

Secondly, Humane doctrines have no humbling power in them. They may a little tickle you, but they can never humble you; they cannot cast down Satans strong holds, they cannot melt nor break the heart of a sinner; they cannot make him cry out with the Leper, *Unclean, unclean.*

Thirdly, Humane doctrines nourish not the noble part, the soul of man. The Prodigal was like to starve before he returned to his fathers house. A man may study much, and labour much, &c. lay out much of his time and spirits about humane doctins, and yet after all, be like to *Pharaoh's* lean Kine. A man that studies humane doctrines, doth but feed upon ashes.

Fourth-

Whiles they burned us, said Reverend Moultn, for reading the Scriptures, we burnt with zeal to be reading of them. But where is this brave spirit now?

These things had need be seriously minded in these dayes, wherein humane doctrines are so much exalted and admired.

Fourthly, Humane doctrines cannot cure a wound in the conscience. The diseased woman spout all she had upon Phylis, but was not a penny the better. The remedy is too weak for the disease. Conscience like *Promethæus* Vulture, will still lye gnawing notwithstanding all that such doctrines can do.

Fifthly, Humane doctrines are so far from enriching the soul, that they usually impoverish the soul. They weaken the soul, they expose the soul to the greatest wants, and to the greatest weaknesses: they play the Harlot with the soul, they impoverish it, and bring it to a morsel of bread. Who so poor in spiritual experiences, and heavenly enjoyments, as such that sit under the droppings of humane doctrines?

Sixthly, Humane doctrines make men servants to the humors and corruptions of men. They make men pleasers of men, rather than pleasers of God. Yea, they make men set up themselves and others, sometimes in the room of Christ, and sometimes above Christ. I hope these few short hints may prevail with some to fall in with this counsel, that so they may the better preach the Lord Jesus to the people.

And so much for this Doctrine.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL APOSTLE TO THE ROMANS.

EPHES. 3. 8.

Unto me who am lesse then the least of all Saints, is this grace given, that I should Preach among the Gentiles, the Unsearchable Riches of Christ.



Having spoken much concerning Ministers Duty, I shall now speak a little concerning their Dignity, and so finish this Text.

Unto me who am lesse then the least of all Saints is this Grace given that I should Preach among the Gentiles, the Unsearchable riches of Christ. This grace, this favour, this honour is given to me, that I should Preach, &c. I look not upon it as a poor, low, mean, contemptible thing but as a very great honour, That I should Preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ.

The Observation that I shall speak to, is this.

Observation.

That the Office of a Minister, or Preacher, is honourable.

For the understanding of this Point, Premise with me, two things.

First, That by a Minister, I understand one that is qualified according to Gospel Rules, and that is internally called by God, and externally called by the people of God, to the Ministerial Office.

The second thing that I would have you premise with me

me for the understanding of the Point, is this, That the common Appellation of those that are set apart for the Preaching of the Gospel in the new Testament, is (DIACONOS) Ministers. So in 1 Cor. 3. 5. 2 Cor. 3. 6. & Chap. 6. 4. & Chap. 11. 23. 1 Tim. 4. 16. And in divers other places, the word *Minister* is a Title of office, service or administration, given frequently to the Preachers of the Gospel. As for the names of Ambassadors, Stewards, and the like, wherewith they are often honoured, they are figurative, and given to them by allusion only.

These two things being Premised, we shall now proceed to the opening of the Point.

And in the first place I shall prove, That the Office of a Minister is an honourable Office.

And then in the second place I shall shew you, What honour is due to them.

And then in the third place I shall shew you, How you are to honour them.

And then in the last place, we shall bring home all by a word of Application.

Christians give me leave to tell you this by the way, That since the Gospel hath shined in England, a godly, faithfull, painful Ministry was never more lubrily and vehemently struck at by men that make a fair shew, and by men of corrupt opinions, & wicked lives. This age affords many Church-Levellers, as well as State-Levellers. Some there be, that under that notion of plucking up corrupt Ministers, would pluck up by the very roots, the true Ministry. But God has said, and will be still too hard for such men; if they will be Monsters, God will be sure to be Master. His faithfull Ministers are stars that he holds in his right hand, and men shall as soon pull the Sun out of the Firmament, as pull them out of the hand of God.

Now considering that there is such a spirit abroad in the world, I hope no sober serious Christians will be offended at my standing up to vindicate the honour of a godly faithfull Ministry. In order to which, I shall first prove that the Office of a Minister is honourable, and to me these following things speak it out.

First, The several Names and Titles that are given to them in Scripture, doth speak them out to be honourable. They are called Fathers, Stewards, Ambassadors, Overseers, and Angels, as you all know that know any thing of Scripture. To spend time to prove this, would be to light Candles to see the Sun at noon.

Secondly, Their work is honourable. Their whole work is about souls, about winning souls to Christ, and about building souls up in Christ, and to these two heads, the main work of the Ministry may be reduced. The more noble the soul is, the more honour is to be used and exercised about it. *Jam. 5. 20. Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.*

Let him know: That is, let him take notice that an honourable & glorious work is done by him. The soul is the immediate work of God, the soul is the Image of God, the soul is capable of union & communion with God, the soul is more worth then a world, yea, then a thousand worlds. Christ prayed for souls, and wrought miracles for souls, & wept for souls, and left his fathers bosome for souls, and bled out his heart blood for souls, and is gone to heaven to make provision for souls, yea, he is now a making intercession for souls. All which speaks out the excellency of their Office, whose whole work is about souls.

The *Jew* say of *Moses*, his soul, that it was sucked out of his mouth with a kisse. Souls are dear, and sweet to God.

A third thing that speaks our ministry, is this. They are fellow-labourers with God. They are Co-workers with God in the salvation of sinners. And this is a mighty honour, to be a fellow-labourer with God, to be a co-worker with God, *1 Cor. 3. 9. For we are labourers together with God.* Who would not work hard with such sweet company? Who would not cherish love and honour such service? Ministers are called the light and salt of the world, because they enlighten blind souls, and season unsavoury souls, and so save them from corruption and perdition. *Oh, to be*

*O animis Dei
insignita ima-
gine, desponsa
fide, donata
spiritu, &c.
Bernard.*

*O Divine soul
invested with
the Image of
God, espoused
to him by
faith, &c.*

Mat. 5. 14.

John 5. 35.

Mat. 5. 13.

Mark 9. 59.

60.

joyed in my work with God, is as hungry boy and what
 have able to express it. *1 Cor. 13: 12*

The Senate of Rome accounted it a diminution of *Augustus*
Cæsars dignity, to joyn any Consul with him for the better
 carrying on the Affairs of the State. Oh but our God doth
 not think it a diminution of his dignity, that even his poor
 despised servants should be fellow labourers, and co-work-
 ers with him in the salvation of souls.

Fourthly, The honorable account that the Lord hath
 of them in this employment, speaks out this truth, *That*
their Office is Honourable. In *Mat. 10: 41, 42* compared: *He*
that receiveth me, he that receiveth a Prophet in the
name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets reward. And *Luke 10:*
10. He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that despises you,
despises me. This honourable account God hath of all his
 faithful servants in this employment.

The fifth thing that speaks out this truth, is this, they
 serve an honourable master. They serve him that is all ear-
 to hear, all hand to punish, all power to protect, all wisdom
 to direct, all goodness to relieve, and all mercy to pardon.
 They serve that God that is (*Optimum maximum*) the best
 and greatest God hath within himself all the good of An-
 gels, men, and universal nature; he hath all dignity, all glo-
 ry, all riches, all treasure, all pleasure, all delight, all joy, all
 beatitudes. Mark, abstracts do better express God, then con-
 crets, and adjectives: God is being, bonity, beauty, power,
 wisdom, justice, mercy, and love it self. *God is love* (saith the
 Apostle) *in the very abstract.* God is one infinite perfection in
 himself, which is eminently and virtually all perfections
 of the Creatress. And Oh then what an honour must
 it be to those that are employed under so honourable a
 Master.

Sixthly, Their very work and service is honourable.
 Where else did the Apostle cry out, *Woe is sufficient for these*
things. There is no such Embassage in the world as this is,
 in which they are employed. *Ephes. 6: 19, 20. Pray for me,*
that I may make known the Mysteries of the Gospel, for which I am
in chains. Faithful Ministers do not profess the

Kings and
 Princes have
 their Ambas-
 sadors in very
 high account,
 so ha's God
 his.

Ecce omnia
qui habet
Et
benem omnia,
 Aug:
 He hath all,
 that hath the
 have of all.

It is truly said
 of God, that
 he is *Omnia*
in seipso.

Their work
 is to
 treat with sin-
 ners about e-
 ternity, &c.

person of the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; their work is to treat of Peace between God and man, or of open Hostility between the Creator, and the Creature, 1 Cor. 1. 19, 20.

Seventhly, and lastly, Their reward from God is honourable: Though the world Crown them with thorns (as it did their Lord and Master before them) yet God will Crown them with honour. Dan. 12. 3. *They shall shine as the Stars in the Firmament.* You know Ambassadors have not preferments whil: they are abroad, but when they come home into their own Countrey, then their Princes prefer them, and put much honour upon them So will God deal with his Ambassadors. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* So in Isa. 49. 4 & 5. *I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain, yet surely my judgement is with the Lord, and my reward with my God. Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.* So in 1 Cor. 2. 15. *For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish.* Ministers shall be rewarded according to their faithfulness & diligence, though some perish. It shall be with them, as with Vine-dressers; you know Vine-dressers are rewarded according to their diligence and faithfulness, though some Vines never beary nor bring forth fruit at all. As Ministers are diligent and faithfull, so the reward the Crown shall be given forth at last. You know the Barber is as much rewarded for trimming a Black-a-more, though all his pains in rubbing him can never make him white, as he is for trimming and rubbing another man that is white, and by a little pains is made more white. This is many a faithful Ministers grief, that he takes a great deal of pains in rubbing and washing (as it were) to make souls white and clean, pure and holy, and yet they remain after all, as black as hell; but surely their reward shall be never the less with God. The Nurse

looks

God will at last highly reward those very services that men don't regard, &c.

Latimer in one of his Sermons, speaking of a Minister, who gave this answer why he left off Preaching because he saw he did no good.

This faith Leaper is a very naughty naughty answer.

looks not for her wages from the child, but from the Parent. If Ministers, like clouds, sweat themselves to death, that souls may be brought to life, great will be their reward, though those souls should perish for ever, for whom they have wept, sweat, and bled.

God won't deal by faithfull Ministers, as *Exodus* did by his steer-man, who crowned him in the morning, and be-headed him in the evening of the same day: No, God will set an everlasting Crown upon their heads, who remain laborious and faithful to the death. The world for all their pains will Crown them with thorns, but God at last will Crown them with glory, he will set a Crown of pure gold upon their heads for ever. And thus you have the Point proved.

The second thing that I am to do, is to shew you

*What Honour that is which is justly due
to faithfull Ministers.*

Now this I shall shew you in three things; there is a three-fold honour that is due unto them.

First, Honourable Countenance is due unto them that are in so honourable a place and office as they are in, *1 Cor. 14. 1. Let a man so account of us, as of the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God. 1 Thess. 5. 12, 13. And we beseech you brethren to know them which labour among you and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you: And to esteem them very highly in love for their work sake; Or, To esteem them more then exceedingly, or, more then abundantly, as the Greek will bear. And so in 1 Tim. 5. 17. Let the Elders that rule well be accounted worthy of double honour; especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.* The Greek word that is here rendred Labour, signifies not simply (*μωλις*) to labour, but to labour with much travel and toyl, to labour even to lassitude, as he doth that cleaveth wood, or that toyleth in harvest, or that goeth a warfare. Preaching is a most painful work, and enfeebled a man exceedingly, whence the Prophet cries out, *My leanness, my leanness, Isa. 38. 14. 16.*

* *comp. u.*
Under-row
ersto Christ
the Master
Pilot, helping
forward the
ship of the
Church to the
haven of
Heaven.

comp. u.
comp. u.
comp. u.

Our Saviour
at little past
thirty, was

No

reckoned by the Jews to be towards fifty, *John 8. 57.* he had so spent himself in Preaching. Preaching is a spending painful work.

No pains, no labour, no work to that of the brain, no that of the mind, nor none so worthy of praise, as those that are most in that labour, in that work. No mens work is so holy and heavenly, as theirs, nor no mens work is so high and honourable as theirs, & therefore none deserve to be more honoured, then they, though not for their own sakes, yet for their works sake. Shall Turks and Papists so highly esteem and honour every hedg-Priest of theirs, above their monies? And shall not Christians much more honour their faithful Ministers? Faithful Ministers must have countenance, as well as maintenance, they must have reverence as well as recompence. You are not to nod the head, and put out the lip, to scesse, and mock, and jeer at them, *Gal. 4. 24.* And my temptation which was in my flesh, ye despised not, nor rejected, but received me as an Angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. When E-hud told the King of Moab, I have a Message to thee from God, O King. He arose from his Throne and bowed himself, *Judg. 3. 20. Isa. 52. 7.* How beautifull upon the Mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth.

How beautifull upon the mountains are the feet? What's their face then? What's their doctrine then? Their very feet when dirty, sweaty, and dusty, are yet very beautifull and lovely.

It was a common saying at Constantinople, That 'twas better the Sun should not shine, then that *Chrysostome* should not Preach.

I have read of one that said, If he should meet a Preacher and an Angel together, he would first salute the Preacher, and then the Angel afterward. If you do not give them honourable countenance, Jews and Turks, Papists and Pagans, will in the great day of account rise up against you, and condemn you. I could say much of what I have observed in other Nations and Countreys concerning this thing, but I shall forbear, should I speak what I have seen, many Professors might well blush.

The *Grecians* use to give far greater respect and honour to

to their Philosophers, Then to their Orators, because that their Orators did only teach them to speak well, but their Philosophers did teach them to live well. Oh! what honour then is due to them that do teach you both to speak well, and to live well; both how to be happy here, and how to be blessed hereafter. And thus you see that honourable Countenance is due to faithful Ministers.

Secondly, There is an honour of maintenance, as well as an honour of Countenance that is due to them, 1 Tim. 5. 17, 18. *Let the Elders that rule well be accounted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the Corn, and the labourer is worthy of his reward.* It was not the manner in the Eastern Countreies to thrash out Corn as we doe, but their Oxen trod it out, to which the Apostle allegorically compares laborious Pastors, who after a sort crush out that Corn by which the bread of life is made, Gal. 6. 6. *Let him that is taught in the word, communicate to him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for what a man soweth, that shall he also reap.* So in 1 Cor. 9, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. *Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charge? Who planteth a Vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock and eateth not of the milk of the flocke? Say I these things as a man? Or saith not the Law the same also? For it is written in the Law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the Ox that treadeth out the Corn. Doth God take care for Oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes no doubt this is written, that he that ploweth should plow in hope, and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spirituall things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnall things? Mat. 10. 9, 10. Provide neither Gold nor silver, nor brasse, in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shooes, nor yet staves, for the workman is worthy of his meat.* Gods appointment in all these Texts, bespeak it.

Again, You may consider the necessity of it; how shall they go on in their warfare, if they be troubled with the things of this life. Again, they are to give themselves who-

Harvest labourers have meat and drink, and double wages. Some think that the Apostle hath respect to the Law of the first born, Deut. 21. 17. in which a two fold portion is commanded to be given him. The ancient Christians, as appears by Tertullian, were wont in their Agapes, or Love-feasts to give their Ministers a double portion. Surely Ministers should have such a liberal, honourable, and ingenious maintenance, as might set them above the vulgar, as the first born by their double portion, were set up above the rest of their Brethren.

ly to the work of the Ministry, *1 Tim. 4. 5.* And again, the equity and justice of the duty Christ and the Apostle shews in the fore-named Scriptures, *Mat. 10. 10. 1 Cor. 9. 10.* The maintenance of the Minister should be so free, and so liberal, as may testify that you honour him in your hearts, and as may keep him from contempt and scorn in the world. There are multitudes that grumble at the expence of a penny for the maintenance of those Divine Candles that wait themselves to give light to them; that will rather dye to save Charges, then spend a little money to save their lives, yea, their souls. They like well of Religion without expence, in *Basil*, and a Gospel without charge, but if it grow costly, 'tis none of their money. The Scripture sayes, *Buy the truth, but sell it not;* you can never over buy it, whatsoever you give for it; you can never sufficiently sell it, if you had all the world in exchange for it.

The Ministers maintenance is not to be esteemed of the nature of Alms (as some would have it) but is a Tribute of honour, such as is given by an inferior, to his superior.

It is said of *Cæsar*, That he had greater care of his Books, then of his Royal Robes; for swimming thorow the water to escape his enemies, he carried his Books in his hand above the water, but lost his Robes. But alas! what are *Cæsar's* Books, to Gods Book? The word is the field, and Christ is the Treasure that is hid in that field. The word is a ring of gold, and Christ is the Pearl in that ring of gold, and is it then worth nothing? Many deal with faithful, painful Ministers, as Carriers do with their Horses, they lay heavy burdens upon them, and exact work enough, and give them but easie Commons, and then to recompence this, they hang Bells at their ears and necks. They shall be commended and applauded for brave excellent Preachers, and for great pains-takers, &c. That maintenance that is justly due to the Ministers of the Gospel, is honourable, it ought to be suitable to their condition and dignity: The maintenance that is due to them, is of the same nature with that which is given to Princes and Magistrates, by those which are under them, and not a common maintenance which Superiours give to their inferiours or servants.

Thirdly, There is an honour of obedience and service that is due to them, And indeed, of all honours this is the greatest

greatest honour that can be cast upon a faithful Minister, the honour of Obedience, Heb. 13. 7. *Remember them that have the rule over you, who have spoken to you in the word of God.* And vers. 17. *Obeys them that rule over you.* O submit your selves, for they watch for your souls as they that must give an account; that they may do it with joy, and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you.

Obeys them that have the rule over you. The word that's rendered *Rule over you*, in the seventh & seven-teenth verses, signifies Captains, Guides: Faithful Ministers are your Captains, they are your Guides, they are your Chieftains, they are your Champions that bear the brunt of the Battel, the heat of the day, and therefore you must obey them, even as Souldiers do their Captains. So in 2 Theff. 3. 14. *And if any man obey not our words, note that man, and have no company with him.* Brand him as infamous, beware of him, let him see a strangeness in you towards him, that all may avoid him, as one whose company is dangerous, and infectious, Ah Christians! by your submission to their doctrine, you highly honour them, and you make their heavy task to be easie and sweet unto them. Christians, it will be your honour and happinesse in the day of Christ, that you have liv'd out what they have made out to you. I suppose you remember that happinesse is not intail'd to hearing, or knowing, or talking, but to doing, *If you know these things; blessed and happy are you, if you do them.* There are some diseases that are call'd (*Opprobria Medicorum*) the reproaches of Physicians; and there are some people that may be truly call'd (*Opprobria Ministrorum*) the reproach of Ministers, and those are they that are great hearers, and talkers, and admirers of Ministers, but never obey the doctrines delivered by them. The *Corinthians* were *Paul's* honour, they were his living Epistles, they were his walking Certificates, they were his Letters testimonial, 2 Cor. 3. 2, 3. The obedience and fruitfulness of the people, is the Ministers testimonial, as the profiting of the Scholar is the Masters commendation. Oh what an honour is it to a Minister, when it shall be said of him, as one said once of *Ottavins*, *When he came*

ὁ ἡγούμενος
ἡγουμένους.

John 13. 17.

There is no fear of knowing too much, but there is much fear and danger of practising too little.

I fear with *St. Augustine*, That many grieve more for the barrenness of their Lands,

then for the barrenness of their lives. The more the Cypress is watered, the more it is withered. Oh that it were not so with many in these days!

U S E.

into Rome he found the walls all of base materials, but he left them walls of marble. So, here's a Minister that found the people dark and blind, but left them enlightened; he found them dead, but left them alive; he found them a proud people but hath left them humble; a prophane people, but hath left them holy; a carnal people, but hath left them spiritual; a worldly people, but hath left them heavenly; a wavering people, but hath left them settled and rooted, &c. No honour to a faithful Minister, like this. And thus you see what honour is due unto them, &c.

And now let me make a word of use, Christians, *If their Office be so honourable, then honour them.* O give them the honour that is due unto them. Will you make conscience to give others their due? And will you make no conscience of giving Ministers their due? Are there any that are greater blessings to a Nation, then faithfull Ministers? Who have stood more in the gap to turn away wrath, then they? Who have brought you to Christ through the Gospel, but they? Who have turned you from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan, unto God, but them? Who have built you up in the light and love of Jesus, but them? &c. O don't cast scorn and reproach upon them, but give them that honour that is due unto them.

But you will say to me, *How shall we honour them?*

I answer you must honour them these five wayes.

First, You must honour them, *By hearing them, and giving credit to their Message.* The want of this honour troubled Jonah too much; *Who hath believed our report?* Not to believe the report that they make concerning God, and Christ, &c. is to cast the greatest dishonour that can be upon them. The wise men, *Mat.* 2. went many weary hundred miles to find Christ at Jerusalem, some think near a thousand miles. The Queen of Sheba some say went 964 miles to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and what was Solomon's wisdom to that wisdom of Christ that is held forth to souls in the Ministry, of the Gospel. The holy Martyrs thought no weather too hot, no winter too cold, no journey too long, nor no torment too great, to enjoy the Preaching of the

Antisthenes a Philosopher, went every day six miles to hear Socrates.

Nunquam mihi dicunt, quod nunquam satis dicunt.

We can never hear that too often, that we can never learn to well

the Gospel, though darkly. The Heathen Priests began with *Hesug*; they thought it a very irreligious thing to be remisse and vain, though in a vain Religion. Oh that vain Professors would remember this, and blush!

Secondly, You may honour them, By standing fast in the doctrine of the Lord delivered by them. *1 Thess. 3. 8. Ye are our joy, our Crown, if ye stand fast in the Lord; else, saith the Apostle, ye kill our very hearts. If after all, our studying, wrestling, swearing, & Preaching, ye shall play Apottates, and leave the precious wayes of God, and run after notions and vain opinions which cannot profit you, nor better you, you will kill many at once, your own souls, & our hearts.*

Thirdly, You should honour them, By being followers of them, so far as they are followers of Christ. So in *1 Cor. 4. 16. Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ.* Chap. 11. *11. Heb. 13. 7. 2 Thess. 3. 7. Phil. 3. 7.* All these Scriptures bespeak you to be followers of them, as they are followers of Christ.

Alexander had somewhat a wrye neck, and his Souldiers thought it an honour to be like him. Oh! 'tis an honour to Ministers, when their people are like them in knowledge, wisdom, love, humility, holiness.

Plutarch said of *Demosthenes*, That he was excellent at praising the worthy acts of his Ancestors, but not so at imitating them. Ah! many in these dayes are excellent at praising and commending the holy and gracious actings of their Ministers; but not so at imitating them.

Fourthly, You must honour them by bearing them upon your hearts, when you appear before the Lord in the mount; *Eph. 6. 18. 19. 2 Thess. 3. 1, 2. 1 Thess. 5. 25. Col. 3. 4. 2. Heb. 13. 8. Acts 1. 2. 9.* All these Scriptures do bespeak Christians to bear their faithful Ministers upon their hearts, when they are wrestling with God. None usually are opposed, as they; their wants are many, their weaknesses are more, their work is great, their strength is small. O pray, pray more and more for them; yea, pray believingly, pray affectionately, pray fervently, pray unweariedly, that they may speak from the heart, to the heart, that they may speak

If I forsake my profession, I am sure of a worse death then Judge Hales had, said that Martyr.

Bonus dixit, bonus comes. A good leader makes a good follower.

Prayer is
(*Porta calis clavis Paradisi*) The gate of heaven, a key to let us into Paradise. The Jewes fable, That our Saviour by finding out the right pronounciation of the name of God, did all his

Miracles:

But certainly
the right in-
vocation of
the name of
God, would
even make
Ministers
work Mira-
cles indeed.

The Saints in
the Primitive
times did so
stick and
cleave to
those that
were in
bonds, that
the very hea-
then admi-
ringly cryed
out, Look
how the Chri-
stians love one
another.

Ambassadors
are inviolable
by the Law of
Nations, and
the least in-
dignity offe-

speake things that are reasonable and suitable to the capaci-
ties and conditions of his people. They can tell when they
want your prayers, and when they enjoy your prayers; did
you pray more for them, they might do more for your in-
ternal and eternal good, then now they do.

Lattly, You must honour them by adhering to them,
and abiding with them in all their tryals, afflictions, and
tribulations that do or shall attend them. 'Tis brave to
own them in a storm, to own them when others disown
them, when others oppose them, and act highly against
them. Paul lookt upon himself as much honoured by Obe-
siphorus owning of him in his chains, 2 Tim. 1. 16. The Lord
give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me,
and was not ashamed of my chain: But when he was in Rome, he
sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto
him, that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day. And in how
many things he ministred unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very
well. Chrysostome in an Oration, sayes of Christians, That they
would not be kept from visiting the Confessors in Prison, although it
was forbidden with many threatening terrors, and it was great dan-
ger to them.

But to draw to a close, You have heard that the Office
of a faithful Minister is honourable, and you have heard
what honour is due unto them, Let me therefore desire you
all to take heed of scorning, contemning, and despising of
those that are faithful, that are qualified according to Go-
spel Rules. That's a sad word, 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16, 17, 18.
God sent his Messengers early and late to reclaim them, but
they mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his
words, and misused his Prophets, untill the wrath of the
Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy, nor
no healing. David never play'd such a harsh part all his
dayes, as he did to the Ammonites that despitefully used his
Ambassadors, as you may see at large in 2 Sam. 10.

The Romans sacked the famous City of Corinth, and razed
it to the ground, for a little discourtesie they offered to their
Ambassadors. And they slew many of the Illyrians, and
the Tarentines, for misusing of their Ambassadors. And do
you

you think that the Lord is not as tender of the credit and honour of his faithful Ministers, and that he will not avenge the affronts, wrongs and injuries that are done unto them? Surely he will. *Jer. 29. 17, 18, 19. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Behold I will send unto them the Sword, the Famine, and the Pestilence, and will make them like vile Figs that cannot be eaten, they are so evil. And I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and with the Pestilence: And I will deliver them to be removed to all the Kingdomes of the earth, to be a curse, and astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach among all Nations, whither I have driven them. But why will God do this? Because they have not hearkned to my word, saith the Lord, which I sent unto them by my servants the Prophets, rising up early and sending them, but ye would not hear, saith the Lord.* Now mark, though these temporal judgements are not visible among us, yet spiritual judgements, which are the worst of judgements, are very visible. Though there be no sword, no famine, no Pestilence, yet there is spiritual madness, spiritual drunkenness, spiritual giddiness. Oh! the blind minds, the corrupt judgements, the hard hearts, the scared consciences, that are to be found among the Professors of this age! As there are no mercies to spiritual mercies, so there are no judgements to spiritual judgements. Oh the sleightness, the coldness, the deadness, the barrenness that is abroad in the world! God suits his judgements to mens sins, the greatest sins are always attended with the greatest judgements. In these dayes men sin against more glorious means, more great love, more clear light, more tender bowels of mercy, &c. then formerly, and therefore God gives men up to more sad and dreadful (spiritual) judgements, then formerly.

They say when *Hercules* drew up *Cerberus* from Hell, he led him in a Chain, and he went quietly till he came to the Horizon, & saw the peeping of the light, but then he pulled so strongly, that he had like to have pulled the Conqueror and all back again. Ah! 'tis sad when men had rather live in darknesse, and dye in darkness, and to Hell in darkness, then they will see the light, injoy the light, and walk in the light.

red to them is to be as severely punished, as if it had been offered to the person of that Prince whom they represent.

See 2 Kin. 17. 13, 14, 15.
The Lamps went out, and Leander was drowned, said he in the History.

Jer. 13. 12.
Ezek. 23. 33.
1 Tim. 4. 2.
Titus 1. 15.

light. Many fret at the light, and at those that bring it, as the *Aethiopians* once a year solemnly curse the Sun. Such souls stand in much need of pity, and prayer.

And thus (according to my weak measure) I have given out what God has given in from this Scripture, and shall follow it with my prayers, that it may be a word of life and power, both to Writer, Reader, and Hearer.

A MEN.

Soli Deo Gloria in Aeternum.

FINIS.

